



NAVY NEWS

MAY 2015

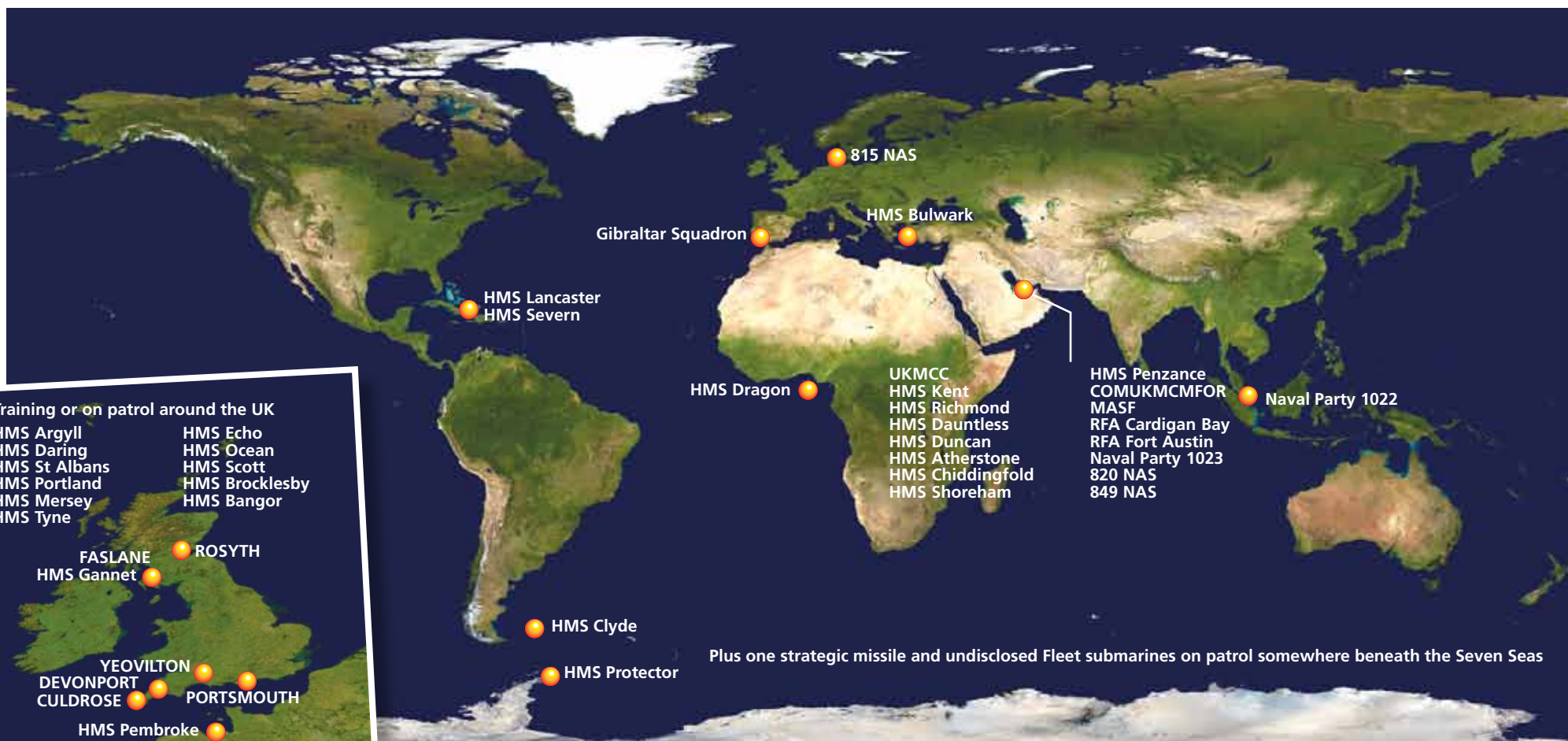
● The Hunt-class minehunter HMS Brocklesby makes her way up a cold-looking River Clyde as she is put through her paces ahead of deploying to the warmer climate of the Middle East. See page 3.

Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald, FRPU North



MINED OUT





Plus one strategic missile and undisclosed Fleet submarines on patrol somewhere beneath the Seven Seas

This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month

HOME and away, historic and modern – all appear in this month's edition of *Navy News*.

Back in their normal surroundings are **846 NAS** as they returned with six Merlin Mk3 helicopters to RNAS Yeovilton (see page 7). The Commando Helicopter Force squadron has spent the past few years at RAF Benson making the move from Sea Kings to Merlins.

Staying with helicopters but this time the Wildcat and specifically those of **847 NAS** (see page 13). The squadron, which has spent most of the last decade operating inland, conducted its first Wildcat deck landing training sorties off RFA Lyme Bay.

Also home are the 320 men and women who spent five months fighting Ebola in Sierra Leone (see page 4). The sailors, medics and Royal Marines returned to Falmouth aboard **RFA Argus** after six months away. Aircrew from **820 NAS** returned to their base at RNAS Culdrose the day before the ship got back to her home port.

Back at sea in home waters (off Plymouth) is **HMS Sutherland** following her extensive revamp designed to extend the life of the Type 23 (see page 6).

Along the coast to Dartmouth and **Britannia Royal Naval College** (see pages 20-21) where officer cadets were loving the new-look Maritime Leadership (MARL) climax of their course as they took part in a mini Thursday War on P2000s.

Back in her natural habitat (at sea) is the Royal Navy's fourth largest warship **HMS Scott** (see page 9). The ocean survey vessel is currently undertaking operational sea training following her 18-month refit.

Preparing at home to go away are the minehunter crews being put through their paces in the Clyde estuary ahead of their tour of duty in the Gulf (see page 3). The crews of **HMS Brocklesby** and **Bangor** will be in the Middle East for six or seven months.

Already in the Middle East are **HMS Kent** and **Dauntless** as they work with French and American carrier task groups in the fight against ISIL (see page 5).

Heading to the Gulf was **HMS Richmond** whose boarding teams made use of the Gibraltar Squadron patrol boat to hone their skills during a stopover at the Rock (see page 5).

Also away from home is **HMS Duncan**, whose personnel have been put through their paces aboard the world's most advanced board-and-search ship's simulator in Crete (see centre pages).

Over to the Gulf of Guinea (see page 8) and **HMS Dragon** met up with six other nations for a sea-security exercise during the final part of her South Atlantic Patrol.

The last Lynx fliers from **815 NAS** to receive their Wings before the aircraft makes way for Wildcat decamped to Denmark for Exercise Final Dash (see page 6). The exercise forms one of their last training serials before deploying to the front-line.

On the historical front, the focus last month was on the centenary of the Gallipoli landings and to mark the occasion the **National Museum of the Royal Navy** opened a new exhibition which challenges some of the myths surrounding the Senior Service and the Turkish peninsula (see page 23).

We also look back to the start of life for **HMS Victory** – and how she proved too wide to exit Old Single Dock at Chatham (see pages 10-11).

The history theme continues with a look at the contrasting fortunes of sister ships **HMS Trincomalee** and **HMS Unicorn** (see pages 28-29). One is enjoying a comfortable retirement while the latter has yet to have her true value appreciated.

Finally to Gibraltar, where one Royal Navy senior rate has been demonstrating his extensive woodworking skills with the creation of a 10ft scaled model of **HMS Pickle** (see page 17).

Getting wound up aboard Lancaster

HAVING mastered deck landings, HMS Lancaster's Wildcat crew moved on to practising their winching skills.

The aircraft, with Lt Dave Neyland at the controls, was put through her paces during her maiden ship deployment.

The maritime version of the replacement for the Lynx has been extensively tested at sea and has deployed for the first time with the Portsmouth-based frigate.

The Type 23's first stop on her nine-month deployment was Lisbon.

During the three-day visit the Wildcat, taking pride of place on the flight deck, attracted a great deal of attention.

A stream of high-profile guests were welcomed aboard to learn more about the state-of-the-art helicopter, including the British Ambassador to Portugal, Mrs Kirsty

Hayes, the Vice-Chairman of the Portuguese National Defence Council, Dr Júlio Miranda Calha, and Deputy Commander Strike Force NATO, Rear Admiral Tim Lowe.

HMS Lancaster's Commanding Officer Cdr Peter Laughton said: "It's a real privilege to have the opportunity to demonstrate the hugely-impressive capability of Wildcat during its inaugural operational deployment."

"Having this new aircraft onboard marks a significant change in the Royal Navy's contribution to the fight against illegal narcotics trafficking."

Also during the visit, a team of experts from the Maritime Analysis and Operations Centre (Narcotics), or MAOC(N), met with HMS Lancaster's Command Team to discuss the support that the ship and her Wildcat can provide to

MAOC(N).

Lancaster and her Wildcat are now well placed to maximise the effect they can have countering illegal drugs trafficking over the coming months.

Cdr Laughton added: "Prior to departing on this deployment, HMS Lancaster's sailors trained really hard for exactly this type of counter-narcotics operation and therefore we are poised and ready to respond to any situation."

The men and women of Lancaster are the first to deploy wearing the new No.4 uniform, testing it in the heat of the Caribbean and the cold of the Atlantic.

In her deployment of 'firsts' she also has a Royal Marines chef on board – Cpl Liam Eley.

The ship expects to cover in excess of 30,000 nautical miles.

■ Deck landings, see page 13



Picture: LA(Phot) Des Wade





THE HEAT IS ON

FASLANE.

Just like Bahrain.
Sea temperature. *Just like Bahrain.*
Air temperature. *Just like Bahrain.*
Visibility in the water. *Just like Bahrain.*
Landscape and vegetation. *Just like Bahrain.*
Global financial hub. *Just like Bahrain.*
Ok. We lied. Faslane. *Nothing like Bahrain.*

But it's the best we've got if we're looking to prepare our minehunter crews for the rigours of a six or seven-month tour of duty in the Gulf – and if you're in mine warfare, you *will* deploy to the Middle East, probably several times.

Which is why the 80 or so souls aboard Her Majesty's Ships Bangor and Brocklesby are being thrown around by the two horsemen of the Apocalypse (war and death – which are bad enough; fingers crossed they should never have to deal with famine or pestilence...) in the Clyde estuary for five weeks.

Faslane is home to the northern arm of the RN's premier training organisation FOST, who do exactly what their colleagues down in Devonport do, but on a smaller scale.

The latter deal with everything frigate-sized and above, the 40-strong team in Faslane – FOST MPV (Mine Warfare and Patrol Vessels) – do the rest: P2000 patrol boats, fishery protection vessels, survey ships and the entire minehunting force – about three-dozen vessels and upwards of 1,000 sailors.

All receive bespoke instruction – you wouldn't put a university training boat through a couple of months of all-out war, or teach survey ships how to find mines.

But whatever his or her calling and vessel, a sailor is expected to deal with the fundamentals of life at sea in the RN: fire, flood, first aid, navigation, communications, plucking an overboard sailor out of the drink, winching an injured shipmate safely aboard a helicopter.

"If a ship has an incident onboard and it is thousands of miles from land, she can't just call for help – the sailors onboard need to be able to instinctively 'recover from adversity' and provide medical treatment for any potential casualties," explained Deputy Commander Sea Training Lt Cdr Ben Vickery.

And then, over the five-week workout, it's on to 'mission rehearsal' across the full spectrum of mine warfare tasks anticipated in the Gulf, involving everything from the equipment used and communications systems to threats, rules of engagement, even enforcing UN Security Council Resolutions – minus the sand... or warmth...

The tailored package for the Sandown – experts in deep water minehunting – and Hunt-class – ditto for shallower waters – naturally focuses on the art of finding, identifying and, finally, neutralising any nasty underwater explosive device (either by the Seafox 'one-shot' disposal system or a charge placed by one of the divers).

But FOST North also features some of the mainstays of FOST South. Any ship must be able to defend herself from attack in the air or on the sea – although the means for doing so in minehunters are relatively limited.

There's no air defence radar; you're reliant on other warships in your vicinity for the aerial picture. Failing that, it's down to the Mk1 eyeball, the 30mm, mini and machine-guns... with some British guts behind them.

Or you can manoeuvre your way out of trouble. Minehunters are slow (Sandowns do 13kts flat-out, Hunts 17 – basically a reasonable *cycling* speed). But they are deft. And small – Hunts are only 196ft long and 32ft, Sandowns even shorter, but a couple of feet wider. And their hulls are made of plastic – which should make getting a missile lock on them trickier than a normal warship.

But the mission in the Gulf goes beyond just the fundamentals of seafaring, war and minehunting. It has a strong emphasis on diplomacy – when not in the kingdom or on exercise, the minehunters can be found visiting the UK's allies in the region, flying the flag (such as HMS Penzance's recent trip to Qatar – see page 6).

"At FOST MPV, we deal with the Navy's most important asset – our people. The training with Bangor and Brocklesby is typical of the type of training that we deliver here," said Cdr Carl Wiseman, Commander Sea Training in charge of FOST MPV.

"These days the Navy not only trains, but perhaps more crucially, mentors a ship's company to prepare them for their forthcoming deployments – and even with prescribed training, we always endeavour to tailor our training to each ship's specific needs."

Both Bs will be deploying east of Suez later this year as part of the rotation of the four-strong Operation Kipion minehunting force (two Hunts, two Sandowns) which has been maintained in Bahrain since the end of 2006.



PICTURES: CPO(PHOT) TAM McDONALD



● (l-r) First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas thanks 820 air and ground crew in Argus' hangar; a magical reunion for the squadron's LS Martin Gould, his wife Jen and daughters Jasmine and Daisy... who doesn't seem too excited by the sight of a Merlin; (below left) LAET Brian Clark is delighted to see his daughters after nearly six months



Return of the men and women who helped to turn the tide against Ebola

Ten times better

THE efforts of the 320 men and women who spent five months fighting Ebola in Sierra Leone contributed to a tenfold decrease in cases of the killer disease.

By air and sea, the sailors, airmen, medics and Royal Marines of RFA Argus "made quite a difference" to the lives of people in the West African Commonwealth nation – part of a wider, concerted national (and international) effort by government agencies, charities and medical experts to deal with the growing crisis.

It fell to Argus to act as a floating warehouse/airfield for those ashore directly involved in tackling the virus – such as at the Kerrytown hospital, built by Britain specifically to combat the Ebola outbreak – and providing them with medical back-up.

She left Falmouth in mid-October with three Merlins and air and ground crew from 820 Naval Air Squadron, medics from across the UK Armed Forces, commandos from 1 Assault Group Royal Marines with an assortment of waterborne craft, and a good smattering of aid supplies.

And it was to Falmouth that she brought them back on April 7 – sans aid, while the Merlins disembarked to their native Culdrose the day before... but the helicopters made a reappearance for a fly-past in salute. Just for good measure, there were plenty of families, miniature Union Flags, and the pomp and ceremony of the Band of HM Royal Marines.

In between, there was a lot of hard work – the pace was relentless; just 18 days devoid of flying operations on a 172-day deployment.

Capt Adrian Orchard, CO of Culdrose – 820's home base – said the squadron had made "a real and significant contribution to the UK's efforts in helping to curb the spread of Ebola in Sierra Leone."

"The dedication shown by the men and women of the squadron to keep the aircraft flying and maintain the tempo of operations was really, really impressive and absolutely in the best traditions of the Fleet Air Arm and Royal Navy," he said.

"But we should never underestimate how much the unstinting support of their families contributed to those achievements."

Aircraft handlers walked up and down the flight deck a couple of miles each week, meticulously scanning it for any FOD – 'Foreign Object Debris', in other words, junk or loose objects – which might be flung up by the Merlins' powerful downdraught and damage the helicopters.

"Whether my team have been operating or keeping watches in the hangars at 36°C or higher, or subjected to the relentless heat on the flight deck dressed in fire suits, they went about their duties with the 'can-do' attitude and spirit aircraft handlers are renowned for," said CPO(AH)

GRITROCK IN FIGURES

- 172** days away
- 386** – average number of Ebola cases per week in Sierra Leone at the beginning of November 2014*
- 37** – average number of Ebola cases per week in Sierra Leone at the beginning of April 2015*
- 16,000** people cut off in the Sherbro/Turtle islands received food for a month
- 154** days continuously at flying stations
- 294** missions flown by **3** Merlins
- 100** hours flown on average per month
- 1/4** of a mile walked every day on FOD plod
- 882** boat transfers completed
- 10** personnel a day moved by landing craft
- 200,000** rounds of ammunition loaded for force protection...
- ... and over **10,000** rounds fired during training exercises
- 80** medical personnel capable of specialising in **40** different areas
- 419** patients assisted
- 50,000** hot meals a month served by the galley – over **1,600** a day
- 80** bag meals a day provided for personnel operating in the field
- 500kg** of stationery, calculators and teaching materials delivered to remote schools
- 35°C** – the typical temperature crews working on the flight deck endured

* Source: World Health Organisation

proved as adept as their aerial comrades in delivering aid to communities on outlying islands – notably those in Sherbro and the Turtle archipelago, unable to trade with the mainland due to the Ebola outbreak and running low on food until a concerted air/sea effort delivered a month's supplies just before Christmas.

And the extended period in Sierra Leonean waters allowed the green berets to patrol, investigate rivers and deltas, recce beaches, give crews invaluable experience in riverine operations, and pave the way for future amphibious training along the coast should the brigade return in force one day in the future on exercises.

Argus' impressive medical facilities were not used to treat Ebola cases – although blood provided by them was – rather they were on hand to provide non-Ebola treatment to Britons involved in the aid mission.

"It was an unusual operation and it worked really well," said CPO(NN) Fiona Swain.

Surg Rear Admiral Alasdair Walker, the RN's Chief Medical Officer, said Argus and all aboard her had "done a marvellous job and made quite a difference."

The ship's company have already received formal recognition in the form of a rare Admiralty Board Letter of Commendation, in part for their efforts off the unforgiving tropical west coast of Africa.

If that award doesn't ring any bells it's because it hasn't been presented in more than 70 years – the last recipient apparently was Capt Edward Kennedy (father of naval officer and later broadcaster Ludovic) in charge of the converted liner HMS Rawalpindi, sunk after encountering the German battle-cruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau in late 1939.

The commendation is awarded not just for Argus' work on Gritrock, but also her efforts delivering Harriers to support the liberation of the Falklands in 1982 (when she was still the Brazilian container ship Contender Bezant) and her work as a casualty treatment centre over the past 25 years (including two Gulf wars and the conflict in the Balkans).

Although Argus, her medics, 820 and the Royal Marines are home, the UK mission in Sierra Leone persists – there are still around 300 British military personnel on Operation Gritrock in the country.



pictures: po(phot) paul a'barrow, rnas culdrose

Different names...

...same objective

EIGHT months in and the international military effort to curb ISIL continues – as does the Royal Navy's efforts supporting those leading that fight.

Both HMS Kent and Dauntless remain on station with French and American carrier task groups as the flat-tops launch daily strikes against insurgent targets in the Middle East.

We last found Kent as one of the guardians of France's flagship... and Dauntless providing air defence cover for the mighty USS Carl Vinson...

...well the two British ships briefly traded places, giving the Type 45 the chance to work with the French, and Kent another chance to slip into the Vinson battle group (as she did just before Christmas – she's pictured above RASING as part of the American force).

Charles de Gaulle is home to a mix of 21 Rafale and Super Étendards and upwards of 2,000 souls...

...double that and add some when it comes to the Vinson (and substitute (Super) Hornets for the French strike aircraft).

To Kent and Dauntless, the mission is Operation Shader, directed against ISIL.

To the Americans it's Operation Inherent Resolve also against ISIL.

And to the French it's Chammal (shamal, the warm Gulf wind) against Da'esh.

Different codenames. Different names. Same foe. Same resolve.

"It has been rewarding to



● A Rafale lifts off from the Charles de Gaulle's deck on a strike mission while (below) Dauntless guards France's flagship

Pictures: LA(Phot) Ian Simpson, HMS Dauntless

work alongside our French and US counterparts and we are proud to have earned their respect," said LS Ross Fletcher, one of the ship's electronic warfare specialists.

"Seeing news reports online and on television of the air strikes against ISIL brings it home that Kent is delivering."

As well as the suite of sensors such as those monitored by the leading hand and his ops room shipmates, the Portsmouth-based frigate has been relying on the eyes (natural and electronic) of her Lynx buzzing around the task groups by day or night as required.

"Operating at sea in the Northern Gulf is a challenging environment for any aviator, but with two nuclear-powered aircraft carriers both launching and recovering fast jets as well as rotary-wing aircraft in close proximity, it is a busy sky to fly in," said Flt Cdr Lt Eifion Parry.

Dauntless' eyes have been

full brunt of carrier operations on Inherent Resolve/Chammal/Shader was borne by France's flagship as the Vinson withdrew, her mission done (sister ship USS Theodore Roosevelt then took her place).

Without the de Gaulle, for those few days, the effort against the insurgents would have slackened.

"Kent provides a secure bubble of international water to support those fighting in Syria and Iraq," said Cdr Andrew Block, her CO.

"Charles de Gaulle relies on us to do our job effectively so that she can concentrate on delivering the strikes against ISIL."

"My ship's company is acutely aware of the important contribution the ship is making to protect the UK as part of the wide coalition effort."

The missions of both RN warships are drawing to a close as Duncan and Richmond arrive in theatre.

Dauntless and Kent are due back in Portsmouth this month.

fixed firmly at the heavens above the Middle East, looking out for threats and also helping to 'deconflict' the skies – ensuring the safe operations of aircraft flying to and fro in congested air space.

And Kent has principally been assigned the task of anti-submarine defence, plus safeguarding against surface attack.

For five days last month the



Richmond rattles Sabre

TWO of HMS Richmond's sea boats dash across the reasonably-calm waters of the Med as they prepare to board HMS Sabre.

The frigate's green (RM) and blue (RN) boarding teams made use of the Gibraltar Squadron patrol boat (small – 24m long – and fast – 32kts flat out) to hone their skills.

Richmond is making her way east of Suez on Kipion duties, supporting the international clampdown on terrorism/piracy/smuggling in the northern Indian Ocean and environs.

Typically Sabre and her sister Scimitar (plus a cluster of RIBs) provide protection for warships visiting Gibraltar, as well as patrolling the waters of the territory.

With the Portsmouth-based frigate's Lynx overhead providing eyes in the sky (plus RM snipers), Sabre played the part of a suspect vessel earmarked for inspection.

From Gib, the boarding team stepped up their board-and-search training in Souda Bay, Crete, at the unique NATO facility.

See centre pages for a feature on HMS Duncan going through the same NATO complex

Diamond sparkling again

THE crew of HMS Diamond have been reunited with their ship after spending months ashore while she received a multi-million pound upgrade.

The third of the RN's six Type 45 destroyers has been out of action since returning from her second deployment last summer.

Like her younger sister Duncan – currently deployed in

the Middle East – she now boasts Harpoon anti-ship missiles, installed on the forecastle.

Diamond's comms and IT systems have also been upgraded, and a new gas turbine has been installed. The Portsmouth-based warship is now on the long road back to front-line duties; she's not due to deploy again until next year.

Sultan's still outstanding

OFSTED inspectors gave HMS Sultan – the home of RN marine and air engineering training – an outstanding mark when they assessed the Gosport establishment... just as they did on their previous visit in 2011.

It provides around 200,000 'man training days' each year to personnel – including the recently-revamped courses for rookie marine engineer technicians and new fast-track ME instruction.

Sultan was one of nine military organisations assessed by the watchdog over the autumn and winter with 14 Regiment Royal Artillery joining the engineering college in the 'outstanding' category while the remaining establishments were graded as 'good'.



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Top training from Torbay

THE crew of HMS Torbay collected the Valiant Trophy for their efforts bringing their boat out of refit and taking her through the rigours of training.

Each year Rolls-Royce – who provide the reactors which power all of the Silent Service's Astute, Vanguard and Trafalgar-class submarines – single out the boat which has achieved the best results undergoing Operational Sea Training.

Emerging from a deep maintenance period which lasted more than two years and saw almost all her 130 crew changed, Torbay's road to front-line readiness ended with five weeks of simulated emergencies (fires, floods and electrical failures) and operations (intelligence gathering, cruise missile strikes, anti-submarine and anti-ship warfare).

At the end of it all, the assessors from Flag Officer Sea Training gave the crew a 'very satisfactory' score – 'satisfactory' (a pass) is the one generally attained by ships or boats.

They put that to good use during a six-month stint east of Suez.

With the deployment done, officials from Rolls-Royce were able to visit the boat in her home of Devonport to present the trophy.

The citation for the Valiant Trophy reads: "Throughout the training period, strong leadership at all levels and a self-correcting culture, coupled with an impressive attitude to training, ensured the crew of HMS Torbay kept pace with a demanding operational training tempo, achieving the high-quality result they deserved."

New medal for long service

A NEW medal is being instituted for regular RN and RM personnel of all ranks for 15 years' service – in particular to allow officers to be recognised for their commitment alongside ratings and Royal Marines NCOs.

The criteria for the Long Service Medal – which will replace ratings/ranks' Long Service and Good Conduct Medal once introduced – are currently being drawn up, but it is not intended to be retrospective and an element of good conduct.

In addition to the new medal for Regular personnel, all Reserve Forces who complete ten years' service will be entitled to use the letters VR (Volunteer Reserve) after their names (back-dated to 1999).

A TUG and pilot boat shepherd HMS Sutherland as she passes the Royal Citadel – a pretty normal sight in Plymouth Sound, except that the Fighting Clan hasn't been at sea for at least 14 months.

Not since 2013 had the Type 23 sailed under her own power as she became the latest ship of her class to go through a major revamp which is meant to extend their lives beyond the 30-year mark.

In the intervening period, ship's company and engineers from Babcock toiled to revamp Sutherland literally from tip to toe – from fresh coats of paint on her hull to fitting the Artisan 3D radar on the main mast, 32 metres (104ft) above the keel.

A new sonar dome has been installed

on her bow and the ops room team can now 'play' with DNA(2), the powerful command system which crunches all the data provided by the frigate's many sensors and allows them to make crucial operational decisions.

First of all, however, the ship's overhauled propulsion systems needed a workout – as did a sizeable number of the ship's company, fresh from initial training. They'll stay with the Fighting Clan through sea trials, exercises, OST and on to her first deployment post-refit.

"Having recently finished my Phase Two training at HMS Sultan, helping to take Sutherland out of refit and back into the fleet is an extremely hard job, but one which I am honoured to be a part of," said

ET(ME) Tyler Flynn, one of the newbies on the frigate.

"This was my first time on a warship out at sea. Other than nervousness at putting all my training to the test, I am looking forward to seeing the world and enjoying my time in the Navy and aboard HMS Sutherland."

The ship was the fourth from last of the original 16-strong class of frigates to be built, joining the Fleet in the summer of 1997. She's due to continue patrolling the Seven Seas until around 2033.

Picture: Leah Hislop



Clan-tastic to sail again



Remember HMS Isis

IN THE Bay of the Seine, half a dozen miles off the picturesque provincial town of Arromanches, the current carries a wreath out into the Atlantic.

Here, 71 years ago, destroyer HMS Isis met a brief and terrible end – possibly at the hands of a mine, perhaps a torpedo – as she tried to safeguard the Allied invasion fleet from anything the German Navy threw at it: U-boats, E-boats, human torpedoes.

And here, on a sullen spring day in 2015, HMS Pembroke paid her respects to the 155 men who went down with the Isis; those who did not perish as the destroyer sank succumbed to hypothermia before rescuers could reach them. Only around 20 crew were saved.

Among those lost, 35-year-old Ordinary Seaman Henry

Augustus Mannerings from Chatham.

Seven decades later, his great grandson PO(D) Les Cockerton was one of the 45 sailors aboard Pembroke honouring the dead of Isis. The dive team from the Faslane-based minehunter also visited the wreck of the destroyer, which lies about 21 metres (69ft) down, for an underwater memorial ceremony.

In her eight years under the White Ensign, the I-class destroyer led an exciting – and at times charmed – life.

She was damaged on several occasions – in Norway, off Syria and in Singapore – captured the German merchantman Leander, sank the U-boat U562 in the Mediterranean, took part in the invasion of Sicily and the Anzio landings before being called upon for Operation Neptune.

815 Karup gold

WAR by land, sea and air tested Lynx helicopter crews of tomorrow to the limit as they decamped to Denmark for a week.

Four helicopters, 16 crew and 72 engineers hopped 1,000 miles from their base in Yeovilton across north-west Europe to Jutland for the final stage of their training.

The crews of 815 Naval Air Squadron received their Wings at the end of January – the last Lynx fliers to do so as the helicopter is withdrawn from service and replaced by the new Wildcat.

Before they deploy on front-line service, operating from the decks of Royal Navy frigates and destroyers around the world, they head overseas for a chance to learn how to fly in foreign airspace.

It's normally fairly small-scale, but the Lynx's last fling – Exercise Final Dash – was a grand, all-action affair featuring a cast of, if not thousands, then certainly hundreds.

The air base at Karup in central Jutland is home to the Danish Lynx force. After dropping in on them, the helicopters flew south to the ranges for some air-to-ground shooting action with the .5 calibre heavy machine-gun with the Danish Army.

Then it was out over the sea to practise anti-surface warfare skills – for dealing with enemy vessels the Lynx carries the Sea Skua anti-ship missiles – at night, in unfamiliar waters.

The helicopters' quarry was the small Danish patrol boat HDMS Nymfen – roughly half the size of the RN's River-class vessels – and having come under repeated attack, its crew graciously allowed the fliers to practise winching on to the ship's small foremast and quarterdeck.

Having played with the Danish Navy and Army, the Danish Air Force wanted to show their version of Scandinavian hospitality – sending up F-16 Falcons to hunt down the visitors in a game of aerial cat and mouse.

The Falcon can reach speeds of over 900mph at low level and Mach 2 at higher altitudes and the Lynx, er, can't. It can reach 200mph flat out – and is pretty agile.

"There was some excellent training for both sides which made it an extremely worthwhile exercise – there was no final score but a draw would seem fair," said Cdr Al Haigh, 815's Commanding Officer.

The week ended with a bang. Two bangs, in fact, as the Lynx crews were invited to watch the Danes firing Harpoon missiles from their Niels Juel and HDMS Peter Willemoes, qualify for deck landings, and meet Denmark's defence minister Nicolai Wammen.

The last act of Final Dash was to get home safely: the ground crews returned courtesy of an RAF Hercules, the Lynx with a little more navigational training.

Cdr Haigh had nothing but praise for his hosts during the week in Jutland: "The flexibility of the Danish Army, Navy and Air Force throughout the week allowed the detachment almost unprecedented opportunities.

"A huge thank you goes to them for their work."



Qatar solo for Penzance

MEMBERS of the Qatari coastguard toured HMS Penzance during the ship's three-day visit to Doha.

The crew of the Sandown-class ship welcomed members of the coastguard boat Mahzam on to their minehunter.

In return, six members of Penzance's crew visited the Mahzam, which is predominantly used for diving and boarding operations.

The Brits were hosted by CO Lt Abdulaziz Ahmed Al-Thani, who trained at BRNC and HMS Collingwood.

After a tour focussing on the Mahzam's underwater Remote Operated Vehicle kit and diving procedures, both crews enjoyed an informal chat over a cuppa.

"As a diver it was really interesting to see how a different country conducts diving operations," said AB(D) Matthew Kilminster. "We got on really well with their crew and it was interesting to hear some of their diving stories."

His CO, Lt Cdr Jim Blythe, added: "This has been a fantastic visit for both the ship and the Royal Navy. It is an honour to be able to host visitors from other nations and show them how we do business.

"The Qatari guests were very interested in our Seafox and especially our dive kit – we are very much at the forefront of these areas.

"The Royal Navy's dedicated to promoting worldwide stability by working with friends and deterring threats by reassuring regional powers. We showed them what a valuable role the RN can perform in the region."

771 and Tyne to the rescue

A JOINT effort by sailors of HMS Tyne and the rescuers of 771 NAS helped an injured fisherman on a Belgian trawler off the Cornish coast.

Fishery protection ship Tyne was on patrol in the Bristol Channel when she picked up a radio message from the Spes Nova after one its crew suffered a severe injury to a finger.

Tyne sent her sea boat across and her sailors gave the crewman medical attention before preparing him for onward transport to hospital in Cornwall...

...which was provided by a Sea King from Cudrose, whose crew winched the casualty off the deck off the trawler and flew him to Truro.

Mersey double

LIVERPOOL'S cruise liner berth was home to two RN ships simultaneously taking a break from working in the Irish Sea.

Survey ship HMS Echo and fishery protection vessel HMS Mersey could both be found at the terminal in the shadow of the famous Liver Building for a visit of several days.

The two vessels opened their gangways for the public to look around, while Echo hosted a number of invited guests, including Sea Cadets and representatives from the World Ship Society.

Quorn goes off

HMS QUORN has left Portsmouth for a three-month deployment.

The minehunter will join Standing NATO Mine Counter Measures Squadron 1, a multinational force conducting exercises in the Baltic region.

The ship, which will take over from HMS Pembroke, will operate with NATO allies. The day after Quorn headed out, HMS Portland left Devonport for her deployment.

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846 NAS return to Somerset with new Merlin Mk3s Back where they belong

SIX Commando Helicopter Force Merlin Mk3 helicopters fly across the Somerset sky as 846 NAS returns to its spiritual home at RNAS Yeovilton.

Grey cloud gave way to blue sky as the six-ship formation appeared over the Blackmore Vale, heading to AgustaWestland before turning right for home.

Personnel from 846 have been at RAF Benson in south Oxfordshire for the last five years making the transition from Sea King Mk4 to the Merlin.

CHF CO Capt Niall Griffin said: "The arrival today of six Merlin helicopters of 846 NAS from RAF Benson to RNAS Yeovilton marks another milestone in the transition of the Commando Helicopter Force from the Sea King to the Merlin.

"Over the next year we will see a gradual build-up of Merlins here in Somerset, as we relocate them from Oxfordshire.

"By Easter next year both front-line Merlin squadrons, 845 NAS and 846 NAS, will be located here at RNAS Yeovilton, reunited with 847 NAS, now flying the Wildcat, the Combat Service Support Squadron and the Force Headquarters.

"This will mark the beginning of a new era in the Commando Helicopter Force's history as we take forward these new capabilities.

"Whilst there are clearly exciting times ahead, it is important to look back on the aircraft which the Merlin replaces. When the Sea King Mk4 retires next March, it will have been in service for some 37 years, serving in more operational theatres than any other Fleet Air Arm aircraft."

The journey from RAF Benson saw the Merlins fly over Joint Helicopter Command



● Clockwise from left, the Merlins land at RNAS Yeovilton; The six-ship formation; The tribute to the Sea King in front of the new 846 NAS HQ; the Merlins taxi around the Sea King



Pictures: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum



headquarters near Andover before passing over Ilchester and the Westland plant, where hundreds of workers who built the aircraft turned out to welcome them back to Somerset.

A large number of Service personnel also gathered at RNAS Yeovilton in front of the squadron's new building, which looks more than a bit like a Premier Inn.

The six Merlins taxied in front of a sole Sea King Mk4 – the workhorse they are replacing.

846 CO Lt Col Del Stafford said: "It's an incredibly powerful day. I am incredibly humble to be selected as CO of the squadron and to be able to bring that squadron back to its spiritual home.

"It has been a big journey, four

or five years for most people, and we are the public face of it today but a lot of hard work has gone on behind the scenes at Yeovilton and RAF Benson in order to make this possible.

"It is a really special day and just great to be back in the south west.

"It was a massive feeling of homecoming. To come back in and see Yeovil opening up in front of you, to fly through Westlands and see a couple of hundred people standing outside waving at us, bringing six aircraft over the town and to be able to turn right and see Yeovilton in front of us was just the icing on the cake on what is a great day."

For senior pilot Maj Jon Parry it was a return to his home county after being based at

Benson for the last 18 months.

He said: "Today's flight was great, nice weather and it's nice to do a bit of formation flying. It was a little bit windy but it's great to be back. It is the start of the future of the Merlin force with the Commando Helicopter Force."

Maj Parry, who has been based at Yeovilton since 1999, added: "The Merlin is the future, it's a newer, bigger, faster, more capable aircraft replacing the workhorse that the Sea King's been for about 40 years. The Sea King's been fantastic."

The return also capped a whirlwind week for Senior Maintenance Rating WO2 Steve Wood, who days earlier received his MBE at Buckingham Palace.

He said: "The capability of

the Merlin in terms of range, endurance and versatility is a significant improvement on the Sea King."

WO2 Wood, who has spent the past year at RAF Benson, added: "We have got competent engineers who have learned the aircraft and have adapted to those unique challenges that Merlin brings.

"It is different from the Sea King, we've gone from technology that is 40 years old to cutting-edge technology but each engineer has worked hand-in-hand with his opposite number from the RAF for 12 months."

CHF's transition from Sea King Mk4 to the Merlin Mk3 – which will take the Junglies through to 2030 – will continue at RAF Benson when 845 NAS

stands up in place of 28 (Army Co-operation) Squadron in May. When fully operational the squadron will return to Yeovilton to reunite all the CHF squadrons.

The programme will see the Merlin Mk3 equipped with a folding main rotor head and a modified undercarriage for deck landings.

This year CHF will take part in Joint Warrior in Scotland, Cougar 15 in the Med and complete training with 3 Cdo Bde in California.

"Having already proven ourselves in the desert of Jordan and the Arctic, the immediate future will see the squadron maintaining a very high-readiness posture – and then we will get back to sea," added Lt Col Stafford.





In hot pursuit of prowling Dragon

A BOARDING party from the Cameroonian Navy makes its way towards HMS Dragon during a seven-nation sea security exercise.

A detachment of Royal Marines aboard the Type 45 meant the UK-led lessons in how to stop and search suspicious vessels in the Gulf of Guinea – some of the most pirate-infested waters in the world.

Exercise Obangame (*togetherness* in a local language) Express saw Dragon work with ships and personnel from the US Navy as well as navies and coastguards from Spain, Cameroon, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea and Nigeria.

The Portsmouth-based warship is now in the latter half of her seven-month South Atlantic Patrol, helping to keep sea lanes open and safe.

RFA Gold Rover, the accompanying fleet support tanker, played host to boarding parties from different countries, who learned from the Royal Marines room clearance, ladder and boat drills, close-quarters combat and search techniques.

Once the classroom lessons were complete, Gold Rover took on the role of a suspect vessel – with the marines as her crew – for the partner nations to put their newly-learned theory into practice.

“For the ship’s Royal Marines the exercise was a great opportunity to work with and train numerous groups from across the region and then allow the team to see how they did for real,” said Sgt Kevin Donnelly.

“It is clear that skills from across the team vary hugely, but this made the task of training them all the more important.”

The seven-day Obangame work-up was one of four African exercises involving the US Naval Forces Europe-Africa/US 6th Fleet.

The exercise culminated with Gold Rover being used to test regional special forces – this time they would have to conduct a boarding on a non-compliant vessel.

With the Cameroonian Naval Force CEPALCO in the lead, personnel from the Nigerian Special Boat Service boarded the vessel.

For Dragon’s Royal Marines, playing the resistant crew, this gave them the chance to test the teams and provide them with a challenging search.

The final assault was a great success and involved more than 80 Nigerian personnel, assisted by American training teams.

It was not all boats and boarding as HMS Dragon also took on the role of mouse for a cat-and-mouse exercise.

Foreign navies were tasked with tracking the Type 45 and identifying her before she moved into new territorial waters.

Dragon was accompanied by a Portuguese P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft for this part of the exercise.

Dragon’s Operations Officer Lt Matt Ellicott said: “The command and control capabilities of the teams ashore was one of the strongest parts of the exercise.”

“It was a good chance for the maritime operations centres to work together with track-and-intercept targets who may threaten the myriad of merchant ships sailing under many different flags that operate in the region.”

Dragon’s first task in the region, following a maintenance period in Cape Town, was to take part in an exercise around an oil platform with Equatorial Guinea.

The Type 45 took on the role of an illegal fishing vessel and was intercepted by the corvette Bata before being escorted out of the area.

HMS Dragon is taking part in further training and exercises before returning home to the UK.



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*Source: Trustpilot 22nd January 2015

Great, Scott's back at sea

THE Royal Navy's fourth largest warship is back at sea after 18 months alongside.

HMS Scott is undertaking operational sea training following an extensive refit.

The ocean survey vessel usually spends 300 days a year away and during her 18-year life has travelled more than 750,000 nautical miles – almost the distance to the moon and back twice.

Because of the length of her refit – extended due to work on her rudder horn – many of her crew have yet to go to sea in the 13,500-tonne warship.

For AB Jake Whittlesea, from Kent, this is his first trip to sea.

"I feel good doing my actual job," he said. "Being the swimmer of the watch and doing fire and flood drills makes me feel like I'm part of the team."

The two-week OST proved a busy time for the crew of 85 as they conducted sea safety training, engineering drills and checks, fire and flood exercises and ship-handling manoeuvres, to name a few.

Scott's CO, Cdr Karen Dalton-Fyfe, who took over in December, said: "I am extremely proud of my ship's company who have worked hard to get our ship where she is today."

"It hasn't all been plane sailing but my team have risen to the challenge with sheer hard work and determination."

"Following our first few days at sea, my ship is operating well and looks great – I couldn't be more pleased."

The Devonport-based ship is able to provide the military with deep bathymetric information about the continental shelf (underwater land).



● Deep ocean survey vessel HMS Scott, pictured before her extensive refit

The ship carries the modern High Resolution Multi Beam Sonar System which is able to collect depth information over a strip of the seabed several kilometres wide – depending on the depth of the water.

Scott is able to survey 150km² of ocean floor every hour.

The ship's survey department is responsible for the collection and processing of navigational, gravity and swathe bathymetric data. All of

Scott's data is sent to the UK Hydrographic Office in Taunton.

The ship, which is fitted with a retractable bow thruster for greater manoeuvrability at low speeds, operates a crew-rotation system with only 56 personnel embarked at any one time.

Built in North Devon by Appledore Shipbuilders Ltd and launched in October

1996, she is the third to bear the name and the second to be named after Antarctic explorer

Robert Falcon Scott.

HMS Scott completed a gruelling deployment in the North Atlantic in 2013 before going into refit in Devonport.

The process saw the ship transformed with a new paint job on her hull and superstructure which increases her top speed because it is low-friction paint.

The use of Hempasil X3 non-toxic anti-fouling paint is also expected to increase her fuel efficiency.

The refit also included a revamp of all accommodation and an overhaul of her engines.



Helping Ben to get his chariot

DINNER on board HMS Scott was the perfect birthday gift for Andy Furse.

Andy's wife Caroline successfully bid for the dinner at an auction held to raise money for the couple's disabled son.

Ben Furse is disabled but has a love of horse riding and needs a saddle chariot as he is now too big for his pony Rupert.

"What can I say? Amazing," Caroline said after their day onboard.

"We won this at an auction for our son and we just managed to make the visit on my husband's 50th birthday."

The day consisted of a tour of the ship, a brief on the ship's history, evening sunset ceremony, and a special dinner put together by LC Jules Andrews from York.

The crew of HMS Scott agreed to help with the dinner and a signed photo of the ship after being contacted by the couple's neighbour Maj Sara Hawkins.

Caroline added: "What an amazing ship, very hospitable, amazing food, very interesting. We have thoroughly enjoyed our visit and are so thankful for the



● Ben Furse

generosity."

Ben, 13, was born with a cleft lip and palate which prevented part of his brain from forming, leaving him with disabilities including epilepsy and global development delay.

The auction raised more than £1,600 and, with other donations, the Yelverton couple were able to purchase the IBEX Saddle Chariot made in Exeter.

Once delivered, Ben will be able to once again enjoy time with Rupert.

If you would like more information or to donate to Ben's cause check out the [Ben Furse Fundraiser](#) page on Facebook

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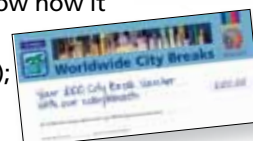
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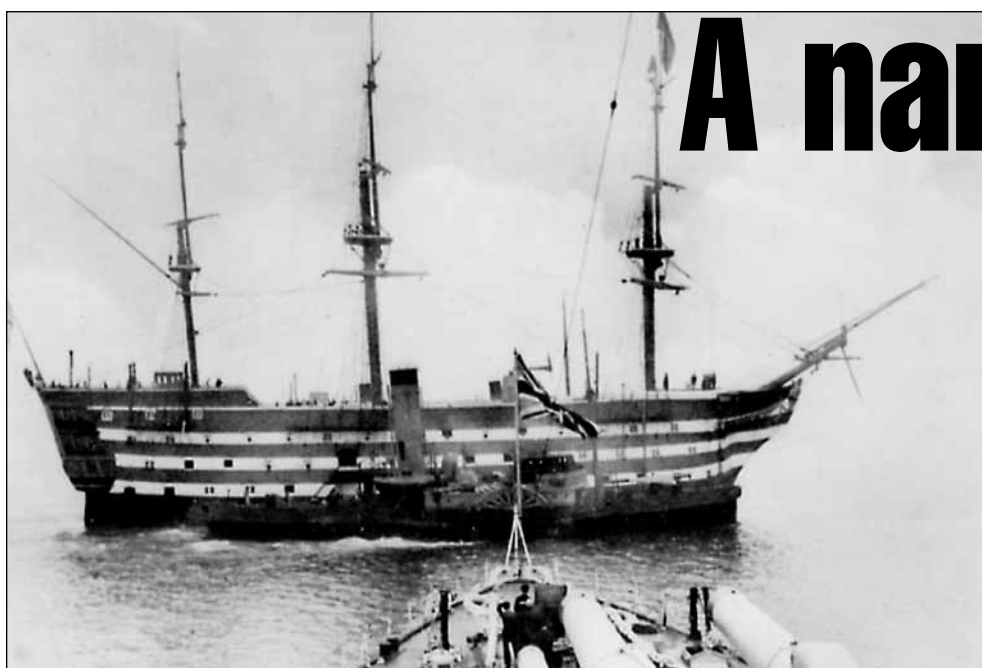
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A narrow squeak and

HARTLY Larkin went to bed on May 6 1765 knowing he would get little sleep.

Chatham Dockyard's 'foreman afloat' was responsible for workers on ships in the harbour, and for setting up the ropes and tackle used to haul new ships out of dock.

And the following day would see His Majesty's Ship Victory emerge from the Old Single Dock – or possibly not...

For the foreman could not

● *HMS Victory is manoeuvred by tugs into dry dock in Portsmouth Harbour in January 1922*

shake the thought from his head that the new man o'war might be just too broad to get through, and would end up jammed in the dock opening.

As dawn broke, the restless Larkin was down at the yard, measuring the breadth of the dock at two points and the corresponding width of the new ship.

His fears were confirmed – at one point Victory was six inches too wide, and the other almost ten inches.

Larkin's anxiety was palpable as he sought out the master shipwright, a man called John Allin, who was already prone to "violent and frequent attacks of a bilious disorder in his bowels", a disorder which caused his retirement some two years later.

Mr Allin sent an assistant to check the figures, and was close to panic when they were confirmed.

He decided that the ship could not be hauled out of dock that day for risk of her being seriously damaged on a falling tide if she got stuck with no means of hauling her back in on to her blocks.

But someone suggested a drastic but more palatable alternative.

The plan was that as many shipwrights as possible should be gathered to hack away at the parts of the open dock gates which would prevent the passage of the ship – but it would have to be done before the tide rose.

The men set to work with gusto, and completed their task in good time.

Victory was ready to be hauled out into the river on schedule exactly 250 years ago, a major undertaking using six treble-

fold tackles and one large cable made fast to the Chatham hulk moored opposite the dock for that purpose.

So not an auspicious start for a ship whose name celebrated the Royal Navy's Year of Victories (1759) – the year in which work started on her.

Her building was longer than normal as the end of the Seven Years War meant that her completion was no longer a matter of urgency.

And the 13 years that followed her floating-out were very much in the same vein – she was roofed over and kept 'in ordinary' for possible future use.

So the investment in this new first-rate ship – she used some 6,000 trees, the vast majority oak with the rest mainly pine, fir and elm.

She was eventually commissioned in 1778, flying the flag of Admiral Keppel, and saw action at Ushant (twice) and Cape St Vincent. She served as flagship for a stellar list of Naval officers – Kempenfelt, Howe, Hood, Jervis and Saumarez all trod her decks.

She spent a year as a hospital ship before she underwent an extensive rebuild in 1800 at Chatham, numerous defects having been found during exploratory work.

The rebuild was completed by the spring of 1803, and the ship emerged looking very much as she does today.

As well as extensive external changes – and the addition of her now-familiar yellow and black stripes – there were numerous internal changes, including a purpose-built sick bay.

By that summer Nelson had raised his flag in Victory and the ship was under the command of Thomas Masterman Hardy – as it would be at Trafalgar two years later.

The story of Nelson's victory at Trafalgar and subsequent

● *Workmen deal with the hull of HMS Victory in Portsmouth Dockyard during the six-year conservation programme from 1922-28*



Chatham marks 250th anniversary

SHE might be a long-established symbol of Portsmouth, but HMS Victory is indisputably a Chatham ship.

And the dockyard where she was born has created a special exhibition to mark the 250th anniversary of the flagship being floated out of the Old Single Dock, which is now known as Victory Dock.

Indeed, the former naval

base in Kent can also claim enough links with Nelson to stake its claim alongside that of Portsmouth.

The future hero of Trafalgar joined his first ship, the new third-rate 64-gun HMS Raisonnable, on the River Medway on New Year's Day in 1771 at the age of 12.

The ship was commanded by his uncle, Capt Maurice Suckling, and the young Nelson soon began his naval training in earnest as a midshipman.

He later followed his uncle on to another Chatham ship, HMS Triumph.

The Historic Dockyard Chatham has put together a new exhibition – *HMS Victory: the Untold Story* – curated by historian, writer and broadcaster Brian Lavery.

As well as the main themes of her career, the exhibition also unearths surprising and often little-known stories leading up to and in the aftermath of the Battle of Trafalgar.

In doing so it seeks to give a more rounded picture of a ship that was on active service for her country for decades.

More than 20 items have been borrowed from the collection at the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, including two models showing changes in her appearance over the years.

A decorative sword (left), original letters and plans, plus what is thought to be one of the earliest-known representations identified as Victory at the head of the Fleet are also on display.

The Royal Collection has provided the 'Nelson Bullet' for the exhibition – the lead musket ball, fired from the mizzen-top of French warship Redoubtable,

which dealt the fatal blow on October 21 1805 – mounted in a silver locket, beneath glass, with some remnants of gold lace from the epaulette of Admiral Nelson's uniform.

The centrepiece of the exhibition is HMS Victory's figurehead, on loan from the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth.

Richard Holdsworth, Preservation and Education Director of Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, said: "From her quiet beginnings of being moored on the River Medway for over a decade after her launch, to being in the thick of battle and then on to Portsmouth Harbour, HMS Victory had a long and varied career."

"While it is not possible to cover all areas in a single exhibition, there are a number of insights that give a really different perspective on Chatham's and the world's most famous ship."

Dr Robert Blyth, Senior Curator of World and Maritime History, National Maritime Museum, said: "The National Maritime Museum is delighted to contribute to this exciting exhibition at the Historic Dockyard Chatham."

"The story of Victory – from her launch at Chatham 250 years ago, through her dramatic and glorious active service, to her present-day iconic status – is a perfect entry point to the wider naval and maritime history of Britain."

And Andrew Baines, Curator and Project Director, HMS Victory, added: "We are delighted

to be supporting the Historic Dockyard Chatham in the development of this exhibition.

"The National Museum of the Royal Navy is committed to exploring the wider history of HMS Victory across her 250 years."

"Chatham is the perfect place to begin an exploration of Victory's story, and we hope that people will complete the story by visiting the ship in Portsmouth, where she has been a prominent tourist attraction for the past 190 years."

Entry to the exhibition, which runs until May 31, is included in the dockyard's normal admission price.

www.thedockyard.co.uk



● *HMS Victory's figurehead*



a broader understanding

death is widely known, but that was far from the end of the story for Victory.

She had been badly damaged in the battle and was virtually dead in the water.

She was therefore towed to Gibraltar by HMS Neptune for repairs, then took Nelson's body back to England at the end of 1805.

The repaired flagship continued to deploy regularly over the following seven years, until she was permanently moored in Portsmouth Harbour in late 1812.

She underwent another major rebuild before acting as the flagship of the port admiral, but then began to quietly moulder as an all-but-forgotten depot ship.

She became a Signal School in the late 19th Century, a role she continued until 1904.

By that time she had suffered serious damage when HMS Neptune, being towed to the breaker's yard, broke free and holed Victory below the waterline.

Emergency repairs were carried out, but her future once again hung in the balance as it had some 90 years earlier, when it is reported that orders were signed for her destruction but the death warrant was quickly rescinded.

On this occasion a personal intervention by King Edward VII saved her, and with the centenary of Trafalgar in 1905 there was renewed interest in the old warhorse.

Less than a decade later the warship was said to have played a small role in the opening stages of the Great War.

On August 1 1914, according to the diary of Prussian Minister of War Erich von Falkenhayn, Kaiser Wilhelm II of Germany signed the order to mobilise his army, shaking the Field Marshal's hand with tears in his eyes.

This set the German plan in motion, involving the invasion of Belgium and war with France, Russia and Great Britain with their respective empires.

He signed the order on a desk said to be made from the timbers of the Victory, made by the firm of Waring and Gillow and presumably presented in the 1890s, when relations between the countries were much more cordial.

Victory continued to deteriorate through the course of the war, and by 1921 was in a very poor state of repair.

It was obvious that she could no longer remain afloat, and following a national appeal, the following year she was moved into No 2 Dry Dock, which became her permanent home.

Her appearance had changed considerably since her final major rebuild of 1814-16, with a number of inappropriate additions.

She looked nothing like Nelson's flagship, but under the guidance of the Society for Nautical Research a six-year programme of restoration was undertaken, and in 1928 she was opened to the public.

She suffered bomb damage in a German raid on the dockyard on March 10 1941 – the second Portsmouth blitz when thousands of incendiary and high-explosive bombs killed almost 100 people, and rendered thousands homeless.

Another 'great repair' was carried out in 1955 on the 150th anniversary of Trafalgar.

Custodianship of HMS Victory transferred to the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN) in March 2012, and work continues today to ensure the ship continues to thrive in the latter half of her third century.

She is the oldest commissioned warship in the world, and attracts some 350,000 visitors every year in her role as a museum ship.

The modern concept of conservation is somewhat different to those which guided the repairs of the past century or so.

Under guidelines set out by National Historic Ships UK (NHSUK), the initial task is first

aid, to stop things getting worse.

In the case of Victory, this meant a number of projects such as caulking the upper decks and painting the hull.

But the second priority is also crucial to the future of the ship – improving understanding.

A structural analysis is obviously important in determining what work needs to be done, but her historical context is just as useful.

That did not mean her history – key dates, her activities in battles and such like were well-documented.

But when the NMRN took over in 2012 not much was known about the ship as a (very large) object.

Of particular relevance were such questions as 'how much of the ship dates back to her original construction?' and how much was affected by the numerous great and middling repairs.

Most of the answers were educated guesses – it is thought the lower gun deck dates to Trafalgar, her keel is original and the rudder is 'very old'...

And such questions are central to what is now regarded as a key issue in the conservation of the ship – significance.

No longer is there talk of whether various parts of Victory are 'original' or not, because her original builders took the biodegradable nature of her materials into account.

When she reached her 40th year, around the time of Trafalgar, a ship like Victory was expected to last less than a decade before needing a 'great repair'; there would be other minor work and constant maintenance in between as planking, rope, canvas and iron degraded in the corrosive sea air.

According to the museum, having spent £63,000 (over £5m at today's prices) on her construction, the Royal Navy spent almost £21,000 (£1.7m) repairing the ship in the 13 years she was moored off Chatham 'in ordinary'.

Before Victory had even been commissioned and sailed as an operational vessel, around a third of her had decayed and been replaced.

By the time Nelson took Victory out to the Mediterranean in 1803, the ship had been afloat 38 years and been through two 'great' and many smaller repairs at a cost of £192,000 (over £15m today) – so three times the original cost of building the ship had been spent on repairing her, simply replacing rotten parts.

Museum experts use a simple analogy – human cells are replaced by the body at differing rates (some in a few weeks, some over decades) but almost all are replaced once or more in the course of a lifetime.

But no one disputes that the person's body is still original, even though most of it has been replaced or renewed.

So it is with Victory – some of her material dates to the 1760s, some to the late 20th Century, but the ship remains a valuable, iconic artefact.

The exact nature of 'significance' is difficult to pin down because it depends on your perspective.

No one could argue against her significance as the only surviving line-of-battle ship from the Age of Sail, and her association with many Royal Navy heroes, with Nelson at the head of the list.

To the people of Chatham, including those of Chatham Historic Dockyard, Victory is significant because she was built there and is a testament to the 18th Century workforce (though maybe not to their planners...)

To Royal Navy sailors past and present the old flagship represents many of the values and the ethos of the Royal Navy,

● Restoration work is carried out on the upper deck of HMS Victory in the mid-1920s



● HMS Victory pictured on New Year's Eve 1927, approaching the end of the first major restoration project on the line-of-battle ship

while for naval historians the ship represents a tangible example of a strand of technology which gave Britain primacy on the oceans of the world.

And it is modern technology which allows experts to unlock many of the secrets of Victory that are hidden in the detail.

Victory's paint scheme has always been one of the most obvious aspects of the ship – but what colour did the Royal Navy paint its ships at the time of Trafalgar?

Or where did the Royal Navy get its timber from to build ships?

The answer to such questions helps inform the conservation process – and sometimes throws up the odd surprise.

Examination of paint samples recovered from the ship's lower gun deck, for example, contains

a hint of baby blue...

Over the past two years the NMRN has undertaken work focussing on an archaeological survey of the shipwrights' marks left on timber as part of the construction and repair process, on a study into the many different paints that can be found on the ship, and an exploration of the use of tree-ring dating – dendrochronology – as a tool to help them understand the ship's history.

This programme, costing around £2m, will ensure every external surface of the ship is watertight, whether by painting or the traditional (and still effective) system familiar to the Napoleonic sailor of caulking – oakum (hemp fibre and tar) is hammered into the gap between deck planks and finished with

molten pitch, which provides a weatherproof seal.

It also included a three-dimensional laser scanning project which allowed accurate models of the ship to be created for detailed analysis of its structure.

This allows priorities to be determined, and long-term planning or the ship's future can be undertaken from a solid foundation – perhaps for the first time since the ship was built more than 250 years ago.

Archaeological surveys have also been carried out, which will not only help with conservation but also add to the knowledge of the ship – something that can be passed on to visitors alongside the tales of heroism and bloodshed that have enthralled members of the public for decades.



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Last of Gallipoli's big guns

TWO months had passed since the Navy tried to force the Dardanelles, one since British and Commonwealth forces had stormed the shores of the Gallipoli peninsula.

But neither the might of the Fleet nor the guts of Tommy and the Anzacs had been able to sweep up the peninsula and allow the ships to sail into Constantinople Harbour to force the Ottoman Empire to make peace.

The Turks were holding firm – they had been forced back in places, but the stalemate of the Western Front was mirrored by deadlock in the Dardanelles, exactly what political and military masters in London and Paris had sought to avoid.

However unsuccessful the Dardanelles campaign had proven to be so far from an Allied viewpoint, it was straining the Turks to the limit – so much so that Constantinople begged its ally in Berlin for help, not least to nullify the enemy's naval supremacy.

The Kaiser diverted a handful of U-boats from the blockade against Britain to the Austro-Hungarian port of Pola (today Pula in Croatia), among them U21 commanded by Otto Hersing.

In the opening days of the war, Hersing had sunk HMS

Pathfinder – “the first live torpedo in the history of the world” he rather smugly observed in his less-than-modestly titled memoirs *U21 rettet die Dardanelles* (U21 Saves the Dardanelles).

Even before the U-boats entered the fray, a Turkish torpedo boat destroyer evaded the Royal Navy defensive screen and sank battleship HMS Goliath.

On May 25, Hersing struck HMS Triumph which sank in a matter of minutes – though most of her crew survived, including Rear Admiral Stuart Nicholson, deputy commander of British Naval forces off the Dardanelles.

He promptly raised his flag in the ‘last battleship’ – the 20-year-old HMS Majestic, the only capital ship now actively supporting the men ashore.

“Gone are the mighty Queen Elizabeth, the Agamemnon, the Lord Nelson,” official war correspondent Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett wrote, “chased into protected ports by one or two miserable little submarines, costing about one tenth of each battleship.”

In her prime, Majestic had been one of the finest vessels afloat – the first of nine battleships of the eponymous class, frequently a flagship, present at Spithead reviews. Though obsolete with the advent of HMS Dreadnought, she continued to serve in home waters,

helping to safely shepherd the British Expeditionary Force across the Channel in the first two months of the war.

And then came the adventure in the Dardanelles, bombarding Turkish positions. Each day at Helles or Anzac, she and Triumph moved into position to send shells crashing down on the enemy's trenches. After Triumph was sunk, men at sea and ashore counted the days before Majestic too fell victim to a U-boat. They did not have to wait long.

Shortly after dawn on May 27

– and having spent much of the previous 48 hours on the bed of the Aegean evading the Royal Navy's response to Triumph's loss – U21 surfaced and found the waters off Cape Helles littered with all manner of shipping, their hulls covered in dazzle paint to trick the enemy's eye. It didn't work, for Hersing spied the tell-tale masts of a battleship.

The old man o'war had defensive torpedo nets out and the myriad of ships made it difficult for U21 to get into a good shooting position. Eventually she did, aft of the Majestic. The boat shook as the

torpedo left the tube and raced towards the battleship. Hersing was convinced that it would hit one of the many smaller vessels scurrying about this spring morning.

Ashmead-Bartlett was dozing when a rushing sailor bumped into him. “There's a torpedo coming.” The journalist stumbled out of his bed in time to hear – but not feel – the explosion. But he noticed the Majestic quickly list to port. And then he heard an indescribable noise “as if the contents of every pantry in the world had fallen at the same moment as everything loose in her tumbled about.”

Men took to the water almost immediately – some with lifebelts, many without – and even if they could swim, the waters around the doomed leviathan were so crowded, any strokes were all but impossible. Luckily, the many small boats in the water fished most of the crew out – cutters designed for 30 men were carrying three times that number.

To Ashmead-Bartlett this tragic yet dramatic scene would make a “magnificent photograph”. It became even more graphic as the battleship turned turtle. “There came a dull, rumbling sound, a swirl of water and steam, for a moment her green bottom was exposed to view, and then the old flagship disappeared for ever, except for a small piece of her ram, which remained above water as her bows

were lying on a shallow sand-bank.”

As the Majestic capsized, one sailor ran the entire length of her keel before reaching her ram. He sat astride it until he was rescued – without ever getting wet.

To Hersing, the battleship's capsized hull looked like a whale. He watched the wash sweep across the otherwise calm waters of the Dardanelles. “Suddenly out of the chaos from the panic, the prow of the upturned Majestic stood out – the rest of the battleship was gone.”

The wreck of the Majestic didn't disappear entirely until November. Until then, every Allied ship passing the upturned hull saluted it.

As for Hersing, his exploits earned him the nickname ‘battleship killer’ and Imperial Germany's highest decoration, Pour le Mérite (the Blue Max). He would add another battleship grey vessel to his tally, a French cruiser, in 1916, plus numerous merchant vessels, ending the war as the Second Reich's 27th most successful U-boat commander.

Class: Majestic-class battleship
Builder: Portsmouth Dockyard
Laid down: February 1894
Launched: January 31 1895
Commissioned: December 1895
Displacement: 16,060 tons
Length: 421ft
Beam: 75ft
Draught: 27ft
Speed: 16kts
Complement: 672
Propulsion: 2 x three-cylinder expansion steam engines driving three screws
Armour: 2½-4½in (deck); 9in (belt); 14in (barbettes and con)
Armament: 4 x BL 12in Mk8 guns; 12 x 6in guns; 16 x 12lb guns; 12 x 3lb guns; 5 x 18in torpedo tubes



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

TRENCH warfare, Gallipoli-style. Two sailors scan Turkish positions through field periscopes somewhere near Quinn's Post, barely half a mile inland from Anzac Cove, in early May 1915.

This trench scene (Q 13426) was captured by Sub Lt Ernest Brooks, Britain's first official military photographer.

Brooks had made a career – and name – for himself before the war as a photographer of royalty (he'd accompanied George V to India for the Delhi Durbar in 1911), whose work was reproduced in the newspapers of the day, especially the *Daily Mirror*.

At the beginning of 1915, he'd volunteered for the RNVR as an anti-aircraft gunner, but senior figures at the Admiralty pulled strings and employed him to record the victorious advance on Constantinople. In mid-April 1915, Brooks found himself Dardanelles-bound.

Already off Gallipoli by the time Brooks arrived were the men of the Royal Naval Division.

The division was held in reserve for the main landings on April 25, taking part in a feint at the northern tip of the Gallipoli peninsula in an attempt to draw Turkish troops away from the true invasion area.

Instead, the sailor-soldiers began filtering ashore on April 26, some at the tip of the ‘toe’ around Cape Helles, others to support the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps – the Anzacs – further north.

Both fronts were bogged down – neither had linked up (and, in fact, never would) – but the British leadership remained convinced that the Turkish lines would break, hence they continued to pour troops and material in.



Which is why the sailors and Royal Marines of the 1st Naval Brigade found themselves in the line between Steel(e)'s Post – named after Maj Thomas Steel whose men had captured it – and Quinn's Post, 400 yards to the north (it wouldn't

acquire its name until the end of May 1915 when Maj Hugh Quinn was killed while scouting enemy trenches).

Steel(e)'s sat at the top of “a sheer landslide of gravel where a man could scarcely climb on hands and knees”. Quinn's

Post was even more formidable – widely regarded as one of the most dangerous sites on the Anzac front. Snipers on both sides picked off any man who foolishly raised his head above the parapet – or any periscope for that matter. Behind the

trenches, men lived under canvas in dugouts carved out of the steep hillside.

The only saving grace at Quinn's Post was the proximity of the Turkish lines, so close that the Ottoman artillery dared not fire for fear of hitting their

own trenches.

Otherwise, soldiers filing along Monash Valley below looked up at the stronghold, wrote Australian war correspondent – and later the country's official historian – Charles Bean, “as a man looks at a haunted house.”

They did so with good reason, for the ridges overlooking it were regarded as key to the entire position at Anzac. They were held by the Turks, who would have to be driven off them.

On the morning of May 3 1915, the Nelson Battalion of the Royal Naval Division began moving up the line – under inauspicious circumstances, for they first mistook their Anzac comrades for Turks and opened fire on them. When order was partially restored – and under heavy Turkish machine-gun fire – Royal Marines stormed the dominating ridge, reached the crest and were promptly mown down by yet more machine-gun fire. The survivors scurried down the hillside, the fallen were left where they were hit. “For many days afterwards on the ugly bare shoulder at the top of Monash Valley, their dead lay like ants shrivelled by a fire,” wrote Bean.

It was too much for one Royal Marine, who scaled the peak one night and rolled the corpses of his comrades down into the valley, where they could receive a fitting burial. Henceforth, the crest would be known as Dead Man's Ridge.

■ This photograph is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



Pictures: POA(Phot) Paul A'Barrow
and LA(Phot) Iggy Roberts

First front-line Wildcat squadron completes sea trials Whiskers away!

IT'S viewed as one of the most demanding jobs in the Royal Navy – landing a helicopter on the back of a moving ship.

Aircrews from 847 NAS, based at RNAS Yeovilton, conducted their first Wildcat deck landing training sorties off RFA Lyme Bay.

The maritime version of the replacement for the Lynx has been tested *in extenso* at sea – and has now deployed for the first time with HMS Lancaster.

Not so the battlefield variant of Wildcat (also flown by the Army Air Corps) – while 847 themselves are a little rusty at sea; the squadron spent most of the past decade inland, particularly in Afghanistan and Iraq.

"This heralds the beginning of a new era for 847," said CO Lt Cdr Graeme Spence.

"The squadron is once again now capable of operating from sea."

The trials saw 44 personnel and four helicopters establish a forward operating base at RNAS Cuddephoe in Cornwall.

The squadron was also joined by a team from the Air Manoeuvre Planning Training and Advisory Team (AMPTAT) from Joint Helicopter Command. Flying out of Cuddephoe to the auxiliary landing ship, the crews conducted day and night deck landings – including the use of night-vision goggles (NVG).

The sorties involved flying out to the ship for circuits and landings.

The aircrew also tested Wildcat's advanced camera – Electro Optical System – and navigation equipment.

The new kit helps crews to locate and identify vessels from some distance, enabling training to take place in adverse weather conditions.

The AMPTAT team included a military lawyer from Army Legal Service, who provided some realistic scenario-based training exercises.

One involved aircrew tracking an enemy force, played by police and fire service personnel on and around Bodmin Moor.

This was achieved, both day and night, using the onboard camera to locate and identify targets, building upon crew skills previously learned on deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Over the course of the two-week training period, 847 NAS flew more than 80 hours and conducted 153 deck landings.

All the aircrew qualified to enable the squadron to assume its very high readiness role. As the UK's first front-line deployable Wildcat squadron, 847 NAS can now join any Royal Navy ship with a flight deck and operate around the world at short notice.

Lt Cdr Spence added: "Thanks to the supreme efforts by the squadron personnel, this complicated and vitally-important training was completed successfully and ahead of time."

RFA Lyme Bay also played host to Chinooks and Merlin Mk3s during the ship's busy start to 2015.

The landing ship, which spent

four months on the annual Cougar deployment last year, took part in the Cornwall-based Exercise Southwest Wader off Pentewan Beach, St Austell.

The ship embarked landing craft, vehicles and Royal Marines for amphibious assaults on a former holiday camp.

As darkness fell Lyme Bay's focus turned towards aviation and the arrival of Chinook squadrons completing their deck landing qualifications ahead of Exercise Joint Warrior.

Chinook Mk6 aircraft were then joined by Merlin Mk3s for ship/air integration trials, under the watchful eyes of experts from the Aircraft Test and Evaluation Centre at Boscombe Down.

The trials involved Chinook and Merlin flight engineers, trials engineers, maintenance personnel and an RN liaison officer.

The RN team – including Maritime Aviation Support Force (MASF) personnel – worked alongside their RAF counterparts during the trials, which saw deck landings take place in a mixture of weather conditions.

The Chinook Mk6 is the first of its class to have a Digital Automatic Flight Control System (DAFCS) as well as the latest 'Julius' cockpit and updated cabin. It was the first time a DAFCS Chinook had touched down on a ship; Lyme Bay hosted 105 day and night landings.

The RFA also hosted more than 122 landings of the Merlin Mk3 as



● Chinooks and Merlins also took part in sea trials aboard RFA Lyme Bay



part of the upgrade to the Mk4, which will see a number of conversions including new glass cockpits and avionics, a folding main rotorhead and tail, and improved undercarriage.

The Merlin trials enabled personnel to make a number of highly technical assessments, such as the operating wind and deck limits.

Personnel also checked to see if the aircraft were affected by fumes from Lyme Bay's funnels while the ship also carried out its first helicopter

in-flight refuelling with a Merlin Mk3.

As a mark of thanks to Lyme Bay, her CO Capt Kim Watts was presented with photographs of the trials.

"I am delighted that Lyme Bay and her crew were able to achieve significant firsts for these aircraft, while operating within the challenges of weather and area constraints," he said. "Lyme Bay has probably now completed more flying in 2015 than all her previous years. It's been a very successful task."



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Cool, clever, clockwork



PERSONNEL from Joint Helicopter Command trudge through the snow in Norway during their annual Clockwork pre-deployment and environmental training, as reported in Navy News last month.

JHC took to its Bardufoss base 220 personnel from Commando Helicopter Force, 846 NAS, 659 Squadron and 9 Regiment Army Air Corps.

Pictures: POA(Phot) Mez Merrill



All systems go for QE

THE hi-tech communications system to be installed in the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers has been switched on – 370 miles from the warships.

Around 70 Royal Navy personnel tested 120 tactical voice terminals to the limits of the system's capability.

During the three-day trial at HMS Collingwood more than 20,000 calls were made in order to ensure that the system can cope with 600 phones.

The communications system proved it could cope with three times its requirement, ensuring the 600-plus ship's company and aircrews can all be online at the same time.

When the system did finally reach its capacity it showed itself to behave gracefully without crashing and losing the communication lines which were already set up.

The entire network, known as the Tactical Command and Control Voice system (TC2V), is as crucial to Fleet Air Arm engineers as they prepare aircraft for missions and for damage control and firefighting teams dealing with onboard emergencies as it is to the ops room and bridge teams operating in a task group.

TC2V is one part of the new carriers' mission system, which gives the ships their fighting power.

What made the trials unique was the test on the entire system which will run on the two carriers, currently at Rosyth in Scotland.

The actual mission systems which will be installed in HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales are now responding as if they are in place.

The trials marked a watershed for Lyster Building at the Hampshire base as it was the last major activity to be run at the Aircraft Carrier Alliance's site.

Following the completion of the trials, ACA engineers packed up all the parts of the system to send to Scotland ready to be installed in HMS Queen Elizabeth.

The move heralds a new phase in the programme as the emphasis shifts north and ACA prepares the first of the nation's two carriers for operations.

HMS Queen Elizabeth, which is currently being fitted out, is expected to start her sea trials at the end of next year. Her sister ship is under construction at the Scottish yard.



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Relishing replica challenge

THE Royal Navy will this month commission a new ship – a replica of HMS Pickle.

The vessel is the work of PO(EW) Chris 'Chevy' Levy, who has toiled for more than 100 hours in a hangar adjacent to Gibraltar airport.

"I've been building things for theatre productions for a few years now and really enjoy the challenges each project brings," said PO Levy, who is currently based at Windmill Hill Signal Station in Gibraltar.

The 33-year-old was asked to build the model of the schooner, which was the first vessel to bring news of Admiral Nelson's victory – and death – at the Battle of Trafalgar, for the base's WO and Senior Rates' Mess. The old model in the mess was more than ten years old and falling apart.

He has been building the replica, which is 10ft tall, 20ft long and 5½ft wide, since January.

"The cannon are just a small part of the many deck features I have built and am due to build," he said.

"My aim is to be able to fire them as a broadside; the cannon are already designed to do this, I just need to test them."

PO Levy's building skills were spotted two years ago when he made a 6ft Dalek, which he controlled from inside, for Hallowe'en.

"Not wanting to destroy it I offered it to anyone who wanted it and it ended up going to the Chief Medical Officer in Gib who was a big fan of the show," said the father of three.

He was snapped up by the Trafalgar Theatre Group to design their props and sets and last year won an award for the best set at the Gibraltar Drama Festival.

The senior rating, from Plymouth, added: "Imagination, attention to detail and hard work can overcome any problem that is brought before you."

"I guess I would do more and more projects, in fact I am taking bookings!"

"Seriously though it's something I love to do. Those who know me, know I don't build things by halves, I go all out on any project I undertake."

The model was this month being unveiled and commissioned at a ceremony at the WO and SR Mess in front of Naval personnel, Commander British Forces Gibraltar, and Admiral Lord Nelson (*an impersonator, obviously*).

HMS Pickle was too small to take part in the fighting at Trafalgar but, as well as breaking the news of Nelson's victory when she arrived in Falmouth in November 1805, she also took part in a notable single-ship action when she captured the French privateer Favourite in 1807.

Pickle sank after running aground near Cadiz in 1808.

Windmill Hill, known as Windy Hill, is a Naval monitoring station which keeps an eye on all traffic passing east or west through the Strait of Gibraltar.

Through the ten large windows of this Naval 'observatory' you're offered a near 270-degree panorama not just of the 13-mile-wide Strait and the southern Pillar of Hercules towering in the distance, but most of the Bay of Gibraltar as far as the airfield, and the southern reaches of the Rock, where a strong westerly wind drives a Föhn cloud over the mountain.

There are well over 200 major shipping movements coming into or out of the Med every day. That is upwards of 100,000 vessels a year – and roughly one in ten of them, everything from giant cruise liners to merchantmen and pleasure cruisers, will put into Gibraltar.



● PO Chris Levy at work in the hangar where he has spent the last five months building a model of HMS Pickle, including ten scaled-down cannon which he hopes will fire



Looks like rain, dear



● Examples of PO Levy's previous work, including props for plays and the 6ft model of a Dalek



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Gone – but not forgotten

THEY entered the room at a slow pace, some with sticks or walking frames, others holding each other's hands for mutual support, writes Mike Gray.

Almost 30 elderly gentlemen – the youngest nearer to 90 than 80 – walked around the Avon Suite of the Hilton Hotel, Warwick, seemingly oblivious to the applause of those gathered.

Each member of the top table – including guest of honour former First Sea Lord Admiral Lord West – shook every veteran by the hand as they filed past before taking their seats.

It was a proud moment for the men of the Captain Class Frigates Association, and one which will never be repeated as the organisation has decided that this would be their final reunion.

The group originated in a single ship association for HMS Calder, but as numbers dwindled the reach was extended to wider escort groups, and when those numbers also fell the whole

Captain class was welcomed.

But even that cohort – up to 19,000 sailors served in the frigates at some stage of their careers – has now declined to the extent that a formal association and reunion is no longer viable.

The ships have laboured under an unwanted moniker over the years – the Forgotten Class.

Yet their exploits in the latter part of World War 2, and the price they and their ship's companies paid, should guarantee their place in the annals of the Royal Navy.

The Captain class were part of a large group (more than 560) of 'destroyer escorts' (DEs) built by American yards and serving under the White Ensign as part of the Lend-Lease agreement.

The British ships came from two sub-classes, the diesel-electric Evarts group (32 hulls) and the turbo-electric Buckleys (46).

They were primarily earmarked for convoy escort and anti-submarine duties (hence the frigate designation) and were modified in the UK – "including, much to the chagrin of the men,

the ice-cream makers," said association president Capt Chris Page RN (Retd).

As well as playing their role in the Battle of the Atlantic and Arctic Convoys, ships of the class were also prominent at the Normandy Landings.

Most were named after captains of Royal Navy ships during the Napoleonic Wars.

Of the 78 Captain-class frigates, 15 were lost or damaged beyond repair. Not many classes of RN ship lost 15 over the whole war, let alone the last two years, when the Captain class were active – they all went in harm's way.

They were also responsible for the end of at least 34 U-boats.

More than 700 of their sailors lost their lives – and it was the memory of those victims that frequently brought tears to the eyes of the survivors.

Survivors like Tom 'Sharkey' Ward, 88, of HMS Cotton, and Tom Disley, 91, of HMS Drury, who both worked with depth charges and found themselves, with their families, on the same table – with plenty to talk about.

Sharkey admitted he still gets emotional when he thinks of those who did not survive, and there were murmurs of respect around the room as Graham Latham and Tom Fraser, both relatives of Captain-class sailors, carried out the Bell Ceremony.

The name of each lost or badly-damaged ship was read out along with the number of men lost, each ship being marked by a toll of the bell.

But it was not simply a chance to look back with sadness.

Association chairman Don Hitchcock (HMS Narborough) and Capt Page, former head of the Naval Historical Branch, both spoke of the need to ensure that the name of the Forgotten



● Captain Class Frigate Association veterans file past the top table (above), while Graham Latham and Tom Fraser carry out the Bell Ceremony (below left)

Picture: Tom Fraser

Class lives on.

A wooden plinth at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire will become an 'orphan monument', with associated maintenance costs, with an option to upgrade to a stone memorial at a future date.

The other major consideration at the AGM was the future of the portable museum and its artefacts, including accounts and photographs taken by those who lived and worked in the ships.

The museum also acts as a memorial – veterans such as Dennis Wood, looking at the Roll of Honour, picked out the name F A Cubitt, who died on November 1 1944 when HMS Whitaker was torpedoed off Ireland by U-483: "We knew him as Cupid. He was a lovely chap..." he recalled.

The preferred option for the

archive is to put most items on display in HMS Caroline, with which the frigates – often based in Northern Ireland – had links.

Some written items could go to the Naval Historical Branch, although another suggestion was that there should be a contribution to the Russian Arctic Convoy Museum at Loch Ewe.

Thanks were expressed to Hilton staff, who had already presented Don Hitchcock with a decanter of rum to mark the hotel's association with the frigate men.

Six of the prizes in the raffle – which raised more than £450 – were for accommodation at Hilton hotels around the country.

Opening the AGM, S/M Hitchcock said: "We sailed a good trip, we have arrived back in port, and now we are paying off."

After dinner, Lord West spoke of the frigates' role in ending the U-boat peril, observing: "What these ships achieved was absolutely incredible."

He added that the ships were only as good as their people, and that the veterans "should be very proud of what you achieved," describing the ships' contribution to the war effort as "almost a miracle".

Lord West was presented with a crystal decanter, and S/M Hitchcock said he was pleased at how the weekend went.

"We have got to be realistic – it is now 70 years on," he said. "But I am glad that we have gone out with a bang rather than a whimper."

Only one DE has been restored as a museum ship – the former USS Slater, now open to the public in Albany, New York.



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Swarm attack leaves cadets buzzing about Navy lark Training just got real

THEY had just finished dealing with a fire below decks when the call came from the helmsman – suspicious fast-approaching vessel.

Armed men aboard a rib opened fire; a swarm attack saw more of the enemy appear on jet-skis. A Lynx helicopter buzzed overhead.

Just like a Thursday War.

Except it is Tuesday.

And the Royal Navy vessels at the centre of it all are P2000s – the smallest of the Senior Service's warships.

Welcome to the new-look Maritime Leadership (MARL) Exercise for officer cadets undertaking their Initial Naval Training at Britannia Royal Naval College.

"It was awesome," said helmsman OC Stephen Cox.

"When you're at the careers office, when you're applying and you see all these pictures, you don't actually think you'll ever get to do stuff like that.

"Then I found myself up there, on the helm, steering an actual Royal Navy vessel with a helicopter above, we were going to an attack scene where we need to inspect a vessel. It was just really quite surreal."

In groups of 12, the cadets deployed as additional members of HMS Smiter and HMS Dasher's ship's companies on a fictional reconnaissance mission.

With the cadets taking turns at the helm of the Archer-class patrol ships and acting as the officer-of-the-watch, navigating the ship, they also faced a number of challenges while out at sea, ranging from a man overboard exercise to an attack from small craft.

Moving from picket boats on the River Dart to real warships out in the English Channel is just one way in which the course is evolving at the historic Dartmouth college.

As well as enlisting help from some of the 14 P2000s attached to University Royal Naval Units around the country, BRNC has also secured the support of Lynx helicopters from 815 NAS at RNAS Yeovilton and Sea Kings from 771 search and rescue at RNAS Culdrose.

"MARL is the culmination of a tough and arduous 30-week training package," said BRNC Commanding Officer Capt Henry Duffy.

"MARL is the cadets' final assessment and to add two P2000s, 815 NAS and 771 NAS to the mix adds to the realism of the exercise and to the complexity.

"The Navy is a multi-faceted business and here the cadets get to understand how complex it will be for them during their Naval careers.

"The exercise is also exciting and if you add P2000s and helos it makes it more interesting.

"I am grateful to the 1st Patrol Boat Squadron for supporting the MARL exercise. It is the first time we've run MARL with P2000s."

The introduction of the P2000s and other military assets as they are available, is an exciting initiative into the ever-evolving four-day MARL exercise.

Throughout their assessment, programmed into the final weeks of the course, the cadets live and work on board the picket boats in the River Dart operating as a task group for a



● HMS Dasher at the centre of a swarm attack during the MARL exercise

scenario based on real-life operations. The exercise is run by the Royal Naval Leadership Academy and is designed by Lt Russ Williams of Royal Sovereign Squadron.

HMS Smiter's sedate three-mile journey from Sandquay to the entrance of the River Dart gave little clue to the action-packed events that were to follow.

After passing the castles at the entrance – Kingswear Castle on the eastern side and Dartmouth Castle on the west – HMS Smiter headed east when, off the Mewstone, a man overboard cry was heard.

The cadets had to work together to position the patrol boat close enough to the stricken sailor – a dummy nicknamed Ruthie – to launch the recovery stretcher and winch her on board. A helicopter was then called in to evacuate Ruthie to hospital with the winchman from 815 NAS descending to the deck of the Oxford URNU vessel.

Lt Iain Jardine, one of the instructors at BRNC, who is a Merlin helicopter pilot, said: "The winch transfer had an officer cadet at the helm with the commanding officer of the P2000 guiding him and helping him maintain the flying course."

"It was the P2000 crew's first time doing a winch transfer, so the training benefitted everyone, the officer cadets, the P2000 crew and also the aircrew, who need to do this on a regular basis."

"A vessel like this, because it's quite small, means that you have to get quite low and close in, so it can be quite tricky. Practice makes perfect."

"I'd say it's like driving down a motorway having to stay in formation with a car right next door to you. Say your car is travelling at 70 miles per hour, you have to maintain its speed and then pass someone through the window from one car to another."

Arriving at their destination of Brixham or Torquay, the cadets had just 45 minutes to find, observe and report back on a 'building of interest'.

Once back at sea, as Smiter passed Berry Head, the cadets faced a fire exercise below deck, involving one casualty – volunteer Lottie Simmons – followed by an attack by two jet-skis and a small boat, requiring further support from the helicopter.

OC Richard Batten, a former CPO with ten years' experience, took charge of the incident. He is training as part of his transition to becoming a commissioned officer.

"It was good. I enjoyed it. I've been exposed to this a lot, but never actually sat in the driving seat before. There was quite a lot of adrenaline rushing through my blood, but I wasn't nervous. I'm confident in doing things like that and on a small-scale event it's very easy to deal with the situation because you've only got one priority."

"When you have multiple priorities or multiple incidents you have to prioritise and that can be stressful."

"I was taken a little bit by surprise because I didn't expect the boats to come in, but I think it's all part of the training to adapt and always deal with what's in front of you."

OC Cox, from Middlesbrough, said driving the P2000 was easier than driving his Seat Leon car.

"Sometimes the ship doesn't hold its course so you have to make small adjustments, but it's a lot easier than driving a car," he added.

"I will admit though that the rules of the sea are much more complicated than the rules of the road, but that's the officer-of-the-watch's responsibility so the person at the helm has a pretty easy job."

The Cambridge University astrophysics graduate added: "I think this exercise is designed so it's much easier to engage with it, especially since we've been on here. Obviously on our picket boats we are doing exercises and following orders, but on here it's a lot more realistic where you've actually

got a CO, the briefings are shorter, and all the things that are happening could actually happen in real life."

"I finished university and the jobs that I wanted to do need leadership experience to do that level of work. I'm also massively into my AT and thought the Navy would be a great opportunity to travel, do some AT and things like that. I'm a dive master so I'm actually going to Belize in the summer on a Royal Navy dive expedition and I like kite-surfing as well."

OC Daryl Pounder, an upper yardie, said: "Having come through the ranks you see a different aspect of the operation. As a chief weapons engineer, my job would have been to solely provide the equipment to the command. What we are doing now is a step up so you see as an officer we're here to not only influence policy, but to actually act upon strategic and tactical goals."

"The unit, our operational environment, would be very similar to this, for example if we were operating in an humanitarian disaster-type operation, such as Illustrious and Daring in the aftermath of the Philippines typhoon. What they've set up here at BRNC is really quite specific and lifelike to what we could actually experience."

Fellow upper yardie OC Richard Pickles, 30, from Peterborough, said: "This aspect of the training has been brilliant. We've been up on the bridge and able to advise the CO and acting as the CO in different elements of it, so we've been able to think about all the areas of the mission and what's happening in all the different departments."

"Before, when we've been on a vessel during training, we've only been part of one department and normally you're working with the most junior element because you've never been on the ship before, so you don't get to see how it fully integrates."

OC Pickles joined the Royal Navy in 2001 and the former POAET plans to become a marine engineering submariner.

OC Simon Smiles – officer of the watch – was a sonar submariner now planning to be a warfare officer in a boat.

"It was fantastic to stand on the bridge and see the CO of the unit stand back and let us have a go and almost step into his shoes," said the 27-year-old, who signed up in 2007.

"Apart from giving us his advice he's let us look forward into our careers and and see where we're going to be going in the future. That's been absolutely fantastic and a real training benefit."

OC Cosmo Swarbreck, 25, from Surrey, said: "It's been mad, wonderful, slightly surreal. I'm suffering from sleep deprivation but the combination of helicopters and jet-skis and everything coming at you at a 1,000 miles an hour, is what you join up for really."

For the CO of HMS Smiter, Lt Nick Palmer, it makes a change to have so many on board the vessel, which is normally crewed by a complement of five.

"I'm very impressed with the cadets. They're all very enthusiastic," he said.

"What the P2000 brings to MARL is the ability for the cadets to have a greater understanding of Royal Navy operations."

"We're trying to show them what the Navy does, without using the bigger assets. I'd have loved to have done this when I was at Dartmouth."

"I didn't have that much experience when I joined, so just to get out on this and talk to the ship's company about the Navy and see how we do things is a pretty amazing experience."

The MARL exercise also gave Mid Simmons a greater insight into the Royal Navy.

The Southampton URNU student is in the final year of her history and politics degree at Portsmouth University and hopes to join the Senior Service next year.

"I took part in a sea weekend bringing a full crew of students from Portsmouth to Dartmouth and offered to stay on for a few days for MARL to help out and see what it involved," said the 21-year-old, whose dad is a former submariner.

The new-look MARL is one of a number of changes at Dartmouth, where around 400 cadets a year attend initial officer training.

Capt Duffy, who intends to return to three intakes a year instead of four from September, said: "We're never complacent here, we want to make the training contemporary and realistic."

"If I compare 28 years ago when I was a cadet here, the training is now about developing skills, coaching and mentoring."

"We are careful not to saturate training but boy are the cadets challenged, it is tiring and mentally demanding. MARL is an excellent exercise with which to mark the end of their training."

"As the Royal Navy goes through a maritime renaissance I believe there is one happening here. The college future is now secure, there is modest physical investment and masses of intellectual investment."

"We're looking to make this a more challenging exercise for our students."

"There is a real sense of positivity at this college."

The Initial Naval Training Officer Course is divided into three phases – militarisation, marinisation and maritime leadership.

Militarisation involves induction into Royal Navy life, including marching and looking after your kit. The unit culminates in a four-day assessment on Dartmoor.

Marinisation involves maritime operations, further navigation, boat handling and basic sea survival.

The students taking part in the new-look MARL passed out in front of the Navy Board at the end of last month.

OC Batten summed up how the cadets feel about the MARL: "It's been a brilliant day. I didn't quite know what to expect, but I certainly wasn't expecting it to be as enjoyable."



● Left, the role of a Lynx in the training exercise is acknowledged by the crew;

Right, OC Stephen Cox at the helm of HMS Smiter

Pictures: Craig Keating



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Challenging myths of Navy at Gallipoli

MENTION Gallipoli and the chances are most people think of the lengthy land battle on the Turkish peninsula.

But a new exhibition in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard shows how the Royal Navy remained at the heart of the campaign and dispels many myths surrounding the story.

Gallipoli: Myth and Memory is the second in the National Museum of the Royal Navy's series of exhibitions about The Great War at Sea 1914-1918.

Last month marked the 100th anniversary of the Allied landings in Turkey and the start of an eight-month campaign in 1915 which ended in withdrawal at the close of the year.

"The exhibition is designed to put the Royal Navy back at the heart of the Gallipoli story," said Naval historian Nick Hewitt.

"We explore how Britain went to war against Turkey and why."

"WW1 was called a world war for a reason – it's a Naval war, not just a land war."

"The Royal Navy put an army ashore; it kept those men supplied; took the injured for treatment. It is about the Navy."

The attack on Gallipoli was originally intended as a purely naval operation, aimed at knocking the Ottoman Empire out of the war and opening a supply route to Russia. After British and French warships failed to force the Dardanelles Strait in March 1915, troops from the UK and France, supported by Australians and New Zealanders, fought their way ashore.

The aim was to secure the rugged Gallipoli peninsula overlooking the narrow channel linking the Mediterranean to the Sea of Marmara, Constantinople (now Istanbul), and the Black Sea.

The exhibition – the first to be held under the umbrella of the NMRN, with 95 per



● An occupation 10 bob note and Admiral Carden's plan for Gallipoli are part of the exhibition



cent of the exhibits sourced from RN collections – aims to show that the Royal Navy was instrumental in supporting operations on land, and highlights how the campaign was supplied and eventually evacuated by all branches of the service. The evacuation is widely considered the best-executed chapter of the campaign – the last Allied troops departed by January 9 1916, with few casualties.

Items from Naval Commander Admiral Sackville Carden's archive open and close the exhibition, which starts with his 'pencil on the back of a fag packet' plan, entitled *The Idea*, for Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill.

The displays end with Carden's copy of the Dardanelles Commission Report, his instructions to attend the commission and a hand-written dismissive letter from Churchill denying Carden's request to resume service following illness.

The exhibition includes a number of new exhibits:

■ A Turkish machine gun chosen to dispel the myth that the troops on the day of the landing were mown down by

such weapons. In fact they only had four machine guns and did not use them on the beaches.

■ The main periscope from the submarine HMS E11. Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Martin Nasmith was using the periscope to watch an enemy gun boat sink when a Turkish sailor put a shell through it.

■ A collection of water chits – hand-written on scraps of paper to enable units to collect water from lighters sent in by the Royal Navy.

■ An example of currency given to British Servicemen for when they 'captured' Turkey – a 10 shilling note with Arabic crudely written on it.

■ Work by war artist Herbert Hillier, who served in the balloon ship *Manica*. Some of his sketches are basic while others are colourfully completed. *'Nipper in his element'* shows a sailor smashing up iron to fill jam tins for improvised grenades. This dispels the myth that it was the Turks running out of ammunition.

■ Royal Marines Pte Richard Chapple's uniform, photograph and diary. The dark blue

uniform was made in such a rush it is very rough and ready with the seams unfinished.

He spent the majority of the campaign aboard HMS M33, the only surviving British warship of the campaign. His diary tells of hardship and suffering for the men aboard.

All of his items have been loaned to the museum by his grandchildren.

Mr Hewitt added: "Many modern historians now agree that defeating Turkey wouldn't have ended the war and may have kept Russia involved for longer."

"Often thought of as a British defeat fought by Australian and New Zealand (ANZAC) soldiers, Gallipoli is understood by many as a failure of British leadership."

"In reality, Gallipoli was an Allied operation approved by Allied politicians; planned and executed by British, French and Anzac commanders working in coalition."

The exhibition runs until the end of January next year.

In August this year HMS M33 will open to the public at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard to mark the centenary of the landings at Suvla Bay.

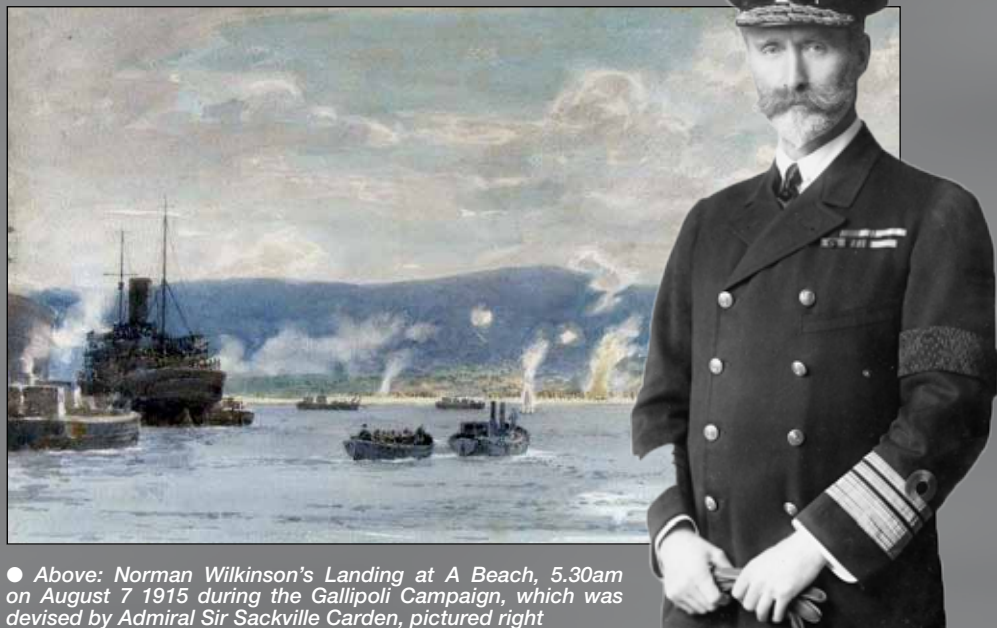
● Tribute to Dardanelles VC hero, see Page 32



● The damaged main periscope of the British submarine HMS E11, main image, captained by Lt Cdr Martin Nasmith, who was awarded the Victoria Cross for his actions in the Dardanelles



● A Turkish machine gun is also on display at the museum



● Above: Norman Wilkinson's Landing at A Beach, 5.30am on August 7 1915 during the Gallipoli Campaign, which was devised by Admiral Sir Sackville Carden, pictured right

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KICK AR

IN THE hellish half-light of an emergency lamp, the smoke swirling around the passageway occasionally catches the red beam of a laser sight.

You have five seconds to put down your weapons or we will use lethal force.

The constant rumble of engines almost drowns out voices already muffled by the gas masks.

Three seconds.

Four red dots are fixed firmly on the centre of the door.

One of the Commandos slowly spins the wheel of the locking mechanism, opens the door cautiously, peering round a little bit at a time as he leans to one side.

Pop. Pop. Pop.

Arghhh.

Pop. Pop. Pop.

Splattered against a bulkhead smeared with red (and a little green and purple) is a terrorist wearing an inflammatory T-shirt: *NATO sucks. I kill you all.*

Clear.

"That," says one of the Royal Marines removing his mask, "was tricky."

The Royal Marines Boarding Team have cleared the galley, mess decks, offices, accommodation areas, stairwells, rescued a couple of hostages, before the showdown in the tiller compartment.

Instructor Christos is happy with time.

Bad guys dead. *Check.*

No friendly casualties. *Check.*

Right, time to do it all over again.

There is nothing like this ship anywhere else on the planet. This is the Aris, the party piece of NATO's Maritime Interdiction Operational Training Centre – the world leader in preparing board-and-search teams for, er, board-and-search operations.

The Aris sits on Marathi Pier, a bleak jetty jutting out from the north shore of Crete's Souda Bay. Even in late March, the upper slopes of the White Mountains which tower over the natural harbour are still blanketed by snow, while a stiff easterly breeze whips the surface of the bay into a frenzy.

It's enough to give a semblance of movement aboard as the 2,500-tonne former cadet training ship rocks gently.

Otherwise, it's down to the board-and-search instructors like Christos – all Greek Navy Seals or former special forces who know their Aris from their elbows – to open up the ship's box of tricks.

Aris has it all (apart from running water and working heads – you need to use a portaloos on the adjacent jetty): sound

effects, announcements in different languages, strobe lighting, booby traps, pop-up targets, billowing smoke.

It's the maritime counterpart of a kill house, a kill ship if you like, where you can practise tactics and let rip with weaponry.

The weapons of choice are MP9 carbines and Glock 17 pistols, modified to fire 'simunition' – simulated ammunition, bullets which possess the characteristics of the real things (velocity, aerodynamics, trajectory) minus the lethality.

But dismiss ideas of paintball on a ship. Being hit by simunition is "ten times harder"... It only leaves a burning sensation. Or small scars. Bruises. A small cut. Nothing serious...

Oh, and when they impact, the little paint pellets explode – leaving a psychedelic splattering on clothing.

Having spent the week working their way through Aris, today it's time for the men and women of HMS Duncan to take their training to the highest level: opposed boardings.

But things can escalate. A compliant boarding (come aboard, lads) can turn into a non-compliant boarding (you can come aboard but we won't help and may even hinder your search) and ultimately even opposed (you're not coming on board... and if you are aboard, we'll fight you).

Typically, the Marines are the muscle, the matelots the searchers and intelligence gatherers. All have been through thorough training back in the UK. The marines are a hand-picked team from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines; they've lived and breathed boarding before joining the destroyer.

The sailors have gone through the RN Board and Search school at Raleigh – a three-week course which teaches both the theory and practice of maritime security.

Instruction at Raleigh makes use of tugs bimbly around Plymouth Sound and the new £1m 'ship in a box' – a series of shipping containers stacked to create the mock-up of parts of a merchantman.

It also makes use of expert board-and-search trainers like CPO Duncan 'Jimmy' Jewell, who's served extensively around the Middle East.

For four months he's attached to the NATO training centre – the first of a series of Brits from 1 Assault Group RM to serve there over the next couple of years.

If you're in board and search, this is the place to be.

"For me this is the forefront of Royal Navy operations. These are the guys on

the front line – they're at the cutting edge of the blade," says the 39-year-old senior rate.

The outgoing head of the training centre, Rear Admiral Ioannis Pavlopoulos, regards the assignment of British board-and-search experts to the facility as "my new weapon".

He says the presence of Royal Navy personnel at his headquarters means the British flag is flying over Souda Bay daily for the first time since World War 2.

"It's very important to have the UK flag flying here next to that of other nations," says Capt Parisi Kanoutos, in charge of training.

"There's great value having a trainer from the Royal Navy – someone like Jimmy has great operational experience, experience that can be difficult to find in other nations and now can be passed on to trainees."

After the Greeks, the RN are the heaviest users of the centre – three or four ships a year before they head east of Suez, plus specialist teams.

But as the centre is the only one of its type in the world, pretty much every nation in Europe or on the shores of the Mediterranean, plus all of Africa's eastern seaboard come and make use of the facility.

They come to make use of Aris, the training towers, containers, fast-roping facilities, the skiffs, RIBs and assault boats, but above all they come to tap unparalleled expertise.

"Board and search requires a different mindset, something we're not necessarily trained to do as sailors," explains Capt Kanoutos. "We're trained to fight. Here there's no enemy, only sailors, innocent seafarers for the most part."

"Boarding is a law enforcement mission – it's about gathering intelligence, collecting evidence."

Which is why, before the next serial, we're sitting in the mess deck-turned-classroom listening to a military doctor explain the art of crew psychology.

We always look at boardings through the eyes of our military teams. Now flip things on their head. Put yourself in the shoes of the crew of a dhow or merchantman.

More likely than not they are going about their legitimate business. They have schedules to meet, deliveries to make, cargoes to pick up. Stopping them upsets all that.

East of Suez in particular, there's a good chance the crew will be Muslim – and will need to pray five times a day. Almost certainly English will not be their

first language – although that's an insurmountable obstacle; 38 per cent of communication relies on intention, 10 per cent on body language.

The psychologist urges firmness, with restraint. "You are not expecting Rambos or Terminators," he stresses. Except today.

Today it's rootin' tootin' shoot. The instructors lay on a series of scenarios which go all the way up to 11.

"The only way to make training more realistic than this is to make the firing live," says Sgt Dave Anderson, a large, friendly Scot who's second in command of the green team.

Lectures are the exception, not the rule. Aris is about action, not theory, evidenced by the hundreds of spent simunition cartridges littering the mess deck.

"What we get taught at Raleigh is good, but there's added realism here – particularly with the simunition," says Lt Greig Sinclair, whose day job is being one of Duncan's weapon engineers.

Sub Lt Ryan Greig, one of the 45's officers of the watch nodes, teaches you 99 per cent of what you need to know. What you get here is that final 1 per cent if anything goes wrong.

"You can see that it makes people think entirely differently. Yes, it's simunition, but the fact that someone is shooting at you completely changes the way you think."

"If it happens for real, you have to be ready of what to expect when someone is shooting back. Having that in your pocket gives you a bit of confidence."

Which is exactly what Christos, one of the instructors, wants to hear. He's been sweating during training, it's been a long time since he's been shedding blood in battle.

He and his colleagues observe the exercise, offering advice during the exercise as how to 'slice the pie' leaning against the door a little bit at a time to see if it opens without exposing your head to the enemy – and feedback at the end of the exercise.

In addition, in every one of the corridors and compartments – of bounds are marked 'no play areas' where cameras record the boarders' movements, whether it's pitch black or broad daylight. At the end of training, teams take a DVD of their 'moves' to see how they fared; additionally, a good few of the teams have small GoPro cameras which give a first-person-shooter view of the operations.

Time for the final mission.

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Marine," Christos explains. "He speaks your language, knows your tactics, knows your moves."

Even without a commando as an opponent, it would be a daunting prospect.

"You don't know the ship or you don't know the layout," says Capt Tom Wallis, in charge of the RM boarding team.

Dave Anderson is singled out to play the 'enemy'. "Youse," he tells his fellow green berets with Liverpudlian relish, "are screwed."

The senior NCO disappears into the bowels of the Aris while the green team check their kit.

On top of normal MTP camouflage they've got a helmet, cumbersome life jacket, body armour - a 7.62mm round from an AK47 (the terrorist or pirate's weapon of choice) will pass straight through the thin bulkheads in the accommodation areas of a ship - water, rations, ammunition, first aid kit, special glasses to provide protection against splinters.

Their 9mm pistols are holstered, their carbines hang relatively loosely on a strap around the shoulder.

If you're expecting fug - where there's fire, there's invariably smoke - you'll need a gas mask.

And if it's night or if the lighting has failed, you'll need night-vision goggles.

Some of the commandos chose single eyepieces, others twin ones (aka 'looses'). Smoke, strobe lights, suddenly moving from darkness to light - such as by opening a hatch or door - all confuse or blind the goggles, so you have to fall back on the Mk1 eyeball.

For the sake of this scenario, it's nothing but blackness - no light whatsoever. Two decks of blackness. Stairs. Hatches. Overturned lockers. Beds. A myriad of trip hazards. And a hell of a lot of pop, pop, pop.

Dave is eventually cornered in the Aris' meat locker. Empty hooks hang down from the ceiling, the floor is littered with empty pallets, cleavers, knives. It's basically a Greek House of Horrors.

His central mass is a kaleidoscope of colours as his comrades slotted him. Just for good measure they got him in the head as well.

"From my point of view, being the enemy, that was terrifying. I knew you were coming, I could hear you. It was relentless," Dave says as he lifts his gas mask.

"I know which side I'd rather be on."



PICTURES: LA(PHOT) NICKY WILSON, HMS DUNCAN



● OC Jasmine Houze cracks the door on the firefighting stance

Battle training afloat

OFFICER Cadets put their training to the test in a new ship-based exercise at Whale Island in Portsmouth.

Just over 100 Defence Technical Undergraduate Scheme (DTUS) students travelled from Birmingham to harbour training ship HMS Bristol for the first Exercise Bull Afloat.

The exercise aims to challenge the OCs, all university students at Birmingham, Aston and Oxford, by placing them outside their usual training environment.

"The students are used to training on land around Birmingham," said Lt Alan Ainsworth, the First Lieutenant.

"But navigating fields with an OS map is very different to having to move quickly and safely around an unknown Type 82 destroyer in a battle scenario. "It's also very important for those students who have never visited a Royal Navy platform before to experience what it is like to live in a Royal Navy environment."

The weekend exercise is set to become an annual event, and includes serials in dismantled close-combat training, range training, firefighting, chemical warfare, and an introduction to a ship's quick reaction force.

There is also a scenario exercise for students to apply their skills in a practical test.

The most important skills taught on the exercise however are those in leadership, concluded Taurus Squadron CO Lt Col Richard Craig.

"Exercises like this put students in scenarios close to what they will experience, and will operate in, within the Services – which is key to developing real leadership skills," he said.

Taurus is one of four undergraduate squadrons which provide AT and bursary support to students studying for an engineering or technical officer role in the Forces or Civil Service.

Naval stargazing

THE Royal Navy has long taken a close interest in the cosmos – and that interest persists into the 21st Century.

The most obvious manifestation of that interest in days of yore was in terms of navigation, when skill with a sextant and chart could mean the difference between safety and disaster.

Naval vessels were also at the forefront of scientific expeditions.

But even in 2015, as scientists probe deep into the universe and way back in time, there is a little bit of pusser's grey playing its part in unlocking the secrets of black holes, red dwarves and blue giants.

In the days before Nelson, the common means of navigating a ship was by dead-reckoning.

A navigator would use a starting point (preferably one of which he was sure – a 'fix') and then estimate the ship's position using heading, time and speed.

Such fixes were gained by studying the angle of celestial bodies above the horizon and referring to almanacs – the art of astronavigation.

Factoring in tides yielded greater accuracy, but any errors could be magnified as the ship moved further from a fix – and fixes might be difficult because of cloud cover or poor weather.

The tragic consequences of navigational inaccuracy were starkly brought home in the Scilly Naval Disaster of November 1707, when Admiral Sir Cloudesley

Shovell's flagship HMS Association and three of his fleet struck rocks off the Isles of Scilly.

The death toll on that stormy evening was anywhere between 1,400 and 2,000 sailors – and the disaster sent a shockwave through the country that reverberated all the way to the Admiralty.

The Longitude Act of 1714 paved the way for the Board of Longitude, established to drive the quest for better methods of navigation – mainly through a valuable Longitude Prize, to be awarded on the establishment of a reliable and accurate means of measuring longitude during long sea passages.

For various reasons that prize (worth well over £2m at today's values) – was never awarded, but carpenter-turned-clockmaker John Harrison would have been a prime candidate with his series of specially-adapted marine clocks and watches.

Only last month a new clock built to Harrison's design won the Guinness World Record for 'most accurate mechanical clock with a pendulum swinging in free air', losing just over half a second over 100 days.

Harrison's first chronometer, H1, was tested on board warships HMS Centurion and HMS Orford.

An early copy of Harrison's H4, which resembled a large pocket watch, was used by Capt James Cook on his second and (doomed) third voyages of scientific discovery to the Pacific in the final quarter of the 18th Century.

By the time of Trafalgar, it was considered prudent

to have a marine chronometer on board ship, the cost of such devices tumbling as more manufacturers entered the market.

The Senior Service has also been influential in the design of more recent navigation developments – Decca navigation radar, for decades a highly-regarded system (particularly for accurate inshore pilotage) was developed for the Senior Service during World War 2, for example.

But all eyes turned to the heavens again in the 1990s when the satellite-based Global Positioning System (GPS), developed by the American military but now freely available to all, was activated.

By then scientists at the University of Manchester had spent some four decades or so peering into outer space – or perhaps 'listening into outer space' would be more accurate.

Even though it is well over 50 years old, the Lovell Telescope – aka the Radio Telescope and Mk1 Telescope – is still the third largest steerable dish device of its kind in the world, and still playing its part in unlocking the secrets beyond the solar system.

The station at Jodrell Bank, in the Cheshire countryside near Macclesfield, was founded using ex-Army kit.

Pioneering radio astronomer Bernard Lovell was carrying out cosmic ray research after the war, building on radar developments for military aircraft that won him an OBE in 1946.

Using an ex-military radar detector set, Lovell – who was later knighted – found that interference in the centre of Manchester – particularly from passing trams – was

jeopardising his team's work.

So he moved to a remote outpost of the university's botanical department – where readings were unaffected by earthbound distractions.

The radar equipment soon proved to be too limited, so Lovell proposed a larger fixed array, which was useful – but not useful enough, as it could only study the sky directly overhead.

By 1950 the only solution appeared to be a steerable dish, and a big one at that – 250ft wide, making it the largest in the world at the time.

One crucial element of that new dish would be the altitude rotator bearings that would alter the angle of the dish, bearings that would have to cope with considerable weight and strain.

Around that time two decommissioned battleships, HMS Revenge and Royal Sovereign, were being scrapped.

The Manchester team bought two 15in gun turret bearings, and the associated mechanisms of the telescope were designed around these pieces of Pusser's kit.

The Lovell Telescope has been upgraded considerably since then, and over the years has been used to track probes to the Moon, Mars and Venus, and now spends much of its time picking up signals from deep space as part of a massive linked array of telescopes across Europe.



● The Lovell Telescope at Jodrell Bank in Cheshire

Tragedy, music... and tea

PORTSMOUTH Historic Dockyard is staging a series of special events under the banner *Dockyard at Dusk*.

Starting this month, the programme offers concerts and performances in historic settings, some of them marking particular anniversaries.

The first, on Friday May 8, commemorates VE Day, and a rousing outdoor concert is promised by the Royal Marines Association Big Band to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of war in Europe.

Many of the band members, on leaving the Service, have gone on to successful musical careers, but their links with the Corps seldom diminish.

In response to public demand former RM musicians formed their own band, which matches the highest standards of the serving bands – indeed, between them they have more than 1,500 years of accumulated music experience, making them possibly one of the most experienced bands in the country.

This month also sees the 250th anniversary of the floating-out of HMS Victory at Chatham (see pages 10-11) and the iconic ship and the Georgian buildings of the National Museum of the Royal Navy will provide the backdrop for an outdoor concert of Saturday May 9.

This time it will be the Royal Marines Association Concert Band providing the entertainment.

Looking further ahead, the Royal Navy Theatre Association returns to the Dockyard on July 15 for a four-night run of Shakespeare's tragedy *Macbeth*.

A tragic love story, a lust for power, fights, ghosts and a moving forest – what more could one want at an open-air play on a summer's evening?

Closing the season, on September 5, will be a Last Night of the Proms, when the Royal Marines Association Concert Band will play a wide range of music from popular marches to film music classics, with a traditional RM finale featuring the Trafalgar Drummers.

Tickets are on sale now – see www.historicdockyard.co.uk/events for more details of these and other events.

Enjoy a special afternoon tea on board HMS Victory on May 14, hosted by her Commanding Officer, who with his crew will answer questions about their role on board.

Afternoon tea will be served in the Senior Rates Mess, an area not normally accessible to the public.

The cost is £30 per person – to book telephone 023 9272 7595 or email community@nmr.org.uk



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Team spirit

A FORMER Royal Marine is battling through the effects of terminal illness to raise funds for a cancer charity.

Jonathon Scott served from 1980-89, seeing action in the Falklands – he was one of the youngest serving personnel in the conflict, as he celebrated his 18th birthday on board Canberra returning to Southampton.

On Civvy Street he had various jobs, including high access ropework on Canary Wharf and as a motorcycle instructor, but Jonathon found his niche in internal communications, eventually setting up his own consultancy, providing services to corporations including BP and Swedish energy giant Vattenfall.

In the autumn of 2013 a persistent pain in his jaw and earache persuaded Jonathon to see a dentist, but his teeth were not the source of the problem.

There was also a slight inflammation in his neck, but batteries of tests discounted a jaw disorder and lymphoma.

However, the swelling in his neck persisted, his tongue and mouth became more sore and the earache was almost unbearable.



● Jonathon finishes the London Winter 10K

“Now, having served in the Royal Marines for nine years from the age of 16, my general attitude to pain and discomfort was typically ‘macho’ and my attitude was to ‘crack on,’” said Jonathon.

But his wife Kate insisted that he return to his GP, who referred him to hospital on a fast-track scheme.

But before he could attend, Jonathon started to cough up blood, and after seeing the duty ENT doctor he was squeezed into the ENT consultant’s clinic the following day.

“I will never forget his words – ‘I am 99 per cent sure that you have tongue cancer but only tests will confirm this.’ He then reassured me that he could get rid of it,” said Jonathon.

The diagnosis was a tumour on his tongue, which was also showing on a tonsil, and Jonathon was scheduled for 30 sessions of radiotherapy combined with chemotherapy.

The first few treatments went well (though a chest infection prevented chemotherapy) but then he started to become very unwell – violent vomiting and nausea as well as expected symptoms.

He continued as an inpatient. “This was extremely hard – on occasion I would find myself waiting outside the treatment room in my dressing gown vomiting into a bowl whilst the radiologist waited for me to stop.”

With the course of treatment finished, Jonathon went home to convalesce, and on June 6 2014 was given the all-clear.

“I grew stronger and starting putting on weight again, but no sign of the earache abating,” he said.

“My consultant became increasingly concerned about this and, following another bout of coughing blood referred me for a scan.

“Kate and I were devastated by the news – it had come back and had spread to my lung. There was a chance it could be an infection left over from my hospital stay previously. If it was lung cancer as well then it is likely that I would be looking at palliative care.”

Jonathon was booked in for a gruelling and risky 12-hour total glossectomy (removal of the tongue), laryngectomy and neck dissection in late November – and it spurred Jonathon to look beyond the hospital ward.

“Having three children and a beautiful wife made the decision easy – I would continue to do whatever it took to have a quality of life for all of us – however long that would be,” he said.

“At some point the Royal Marine in me kicked in – I was determined to fight this battle as hard as possible and stay positive, so I entered the London Winter 10K run in support of Cancer Research and set my goal to raise £500.

“This was a personal physical goal for me – I knew I wouldn’t

be able to beat my previous time of 42 minutes, but getting around it would be a challenge in itself.

“The operation, I had been told, was a complete success (although I would never, eat, smell, talk, taste and had to breath out of a stoma in my neck) and they were confident they had removed every last bit of tumour.”

But there were still problems with his lung, and he had a biopsy just before Christmas.

“On January 2 we were given the heartbreaking news that it was an aggressive spread of secondary cancer,” said Jonathon.

“The following day I asked the clichéd question of my oncologist – ‘how long?’ He advised me to think in weeks not months but, as always, gave no guarantees.”

During this period of hospitalization Jonathon met Sarah Smailes, consultant physio at Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford – “a great lady who really understood my desire to fight on,” said Jonathon.

“She jokingly said that this didn’t mean I got out of the 10K event. After a few days we hatched a plan – initially it was for her to do it with me.

“I was surprised and delighted when, a few days later, she came in and said that some of the nurses on the ward were impressed by my fight and would like to do it with me.

“Wow! ‘Team Jonathon’ was born...”

Sarah worked out the logistics – they needed a wheelchair, suction machine and a nebuliser, as well as transport – ambulance provider ERS transported Jonathon and his family from home to the event for free.

JustGiving pages were set up, and though his progress was slow,



● Jonathon with former Royal Marines colleagues

with encouragement Jonathon started exercising regularly and set a daily goal for the minimum distance he would walk – he was regularly up and down the ward and out to the main entrance, much to the dismay of staff who continually wanted to take blood.

Two weeks before the race he was discharged home with the support of community nurses, but people were still unsure as to whether he would be well enough to complete the challenge.

“I was reassured that even if I didn’t make it to the start line ‘Team Jonathon’, by now 11 people, would! That in itself was enough to spur me on!” he said.

“The race day came and it was absolutely fantastic – I loved every minute of it (apart from the bit when Sarah and Team Jonathon insist I get in the wheelchair as I had started to look very grey).

“The support from family, from friends and from the staff at Broomfield was both exceptional and very humbling.

“I will never forget the last stage when I looked up to see the Royal Marines flag hanging from Blackfriars Bridge, surrounded by Marines who I had served with including in the Falklands, Northern Ireland and on HMS Brazen patrolling the Straits of Hormuz during the Iran/Iraq conflict.”

He managed part of the course on his own two feet.

“Everyone was euphoric at the

end, but I know I couldn’t have done it without the support of my wife Kate and my physio, Sarah. Two incredible women,” he said.

Run over, one of the first questions was – what next? Jonathon needed new challenges.

“I was delighted a few days later when Sarah contacted me and said Team Jonathon want to do another one.”

That ‘other one’ – as reported in last month’s *Navy News* – is the 10K Superhero Run, which takes place in Regents Park, London, this month.

“I don’t think I will every be another Jane Tomlinson or Stephen Sutton but I do want to do the best for Kate, Eleanor, Cameron and William, as well as Team Jonathon, who have supported me both clinically and emotionally through this horrendous journey,” said Jonathon.

“Doing what I am doing is so much easier as an ex-Royal Marine – that Commando spirit means I can’t sit on the sofa feeling sorry for myself – I have to get out and fight this with all I can.

“I need the challenges but they are so much easier with the support I am getting.

“It’s early days and could come to a crashing halt very quickly but as long as I have that fight left I am going to keep knocking off those challenges with the love and support I have.”

■ www.facebook.com/teamjonathonuk?pnref=lhc

Advertising feature

Safe haven for heroes

NEW facilities at the Royal Maritime Club in Portsmouth that will improve accessibility for all wounded heroes were formally opened at the end of March.

Grants from Help for Heroes, Seafarers UK and the RNRMC have paid for renovations, including:

- A new ground-floor Help for Heroes bedroom suite;
- A new Help for Heroes disabled lift serving the ballroom balcony and club rooms;
- A new ground-floor Help for Heroes disabled lavatory;
- Refurbished ground-floor Seafarers gentlemen’s heads and RNRMC ladies’ room.

David Nesbit, Chairman of Trustees at the RMC, said: “After seeing an increased demand for club room hire, Historic Dockyard short breaks and recovery and respite breaks for serving and veteran personnel, we recognised the need to update our disabled facilities.

“We are the only Service club with extensive accommodation in the area and charities find that beneficiaries appreciate our military connections and atmosphere.

“We are grateful to Help for Heroes for enabling us to provide leisure facilities that are fit for all Service personnel and veterans of the 21st Century, ensuring that no function, activity or source of enjoyment is barred to those with physical or mental disabilities.”

At the opening day, Deanne Thomas, CEO of the Sailors’ Children’s Society, and Marica Cleverley of SSAFA paid tribute to the sensitivity and generosity of RMC staff and members in hosting its Respite Holiday programme.

During 2014, 12 military



● The new platform lift for disabled guests



● The Compass Room at the Royal Maritime Club

families (29 people) enjoyed a total of 62 nights’ holidays at the Club.

Families and individuals in

need are referred to the Club by other military charities.

■ www.royalmaritimeclub.co.uk

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Contrasting fort



TWO SISTERS, born a few years and over 4,000 miles apart.

One is enjoying a comfortable retirement in an attractive, purpose-built home.

The other sits in a quiet backwater, her true value yet to be appreciated.

This is the story of two Georgian Leda-class frigates, fast (though not necessarily weatherly) sailing ships based on a French design.

HMS Trincomalee was built of teak and launched in India in 1817, going on to enjoy an active service life in the Atlantic and Pacific, including work on anti-slavery patrols.

Oak-built younger sister HMS Unicorn was a Chatham ship, but as soon as she hit the water in 1824 she was mothballed – placed in ordinary, in Naval parlance – her modified hull roofed over. She never received sailing masts.

Here the histories of the two sisters converged, as they became training, depot and store ships over a century or more, familiar sights in ports around the UK.

Trincomalee ended up as a training hulk in Portsmouth Harbour before she was ‘rescued’ and sent north to Hartlepool – taking the place of revolutionary ironclad HMS Warrior 1860 – for extensive restoration.

Unicorn remains suspended in time; she occupies a quiet berth, overlooked by new apartments, in Camperdown Dock in Dundee, somewhat overshadowed by another sailing ship – RRS

● (Left) A cathead on Trincomalee; (below) the frigate Trincomalee seen from aloft



TWO historic British warships have experienced different fortune over the past three decades – can the frigate Unicorn, tucked in a quiet dock in Dundee, enjoy the kind of renaissance her younger sister Trincomalee enjoyed in Hartlepool? Mike Gray reports.

Discovery, which took Scott and Shackleton to Antarctica at the dawn of the 20th Century.

She awaits a long-heralded redevelopment of the docks and waterfront area of Dundee, stitched into the fabric of the tourist trade by means of a signposted trail.

And to those who appreciate old ships she is certainly worth a visit.

Based on a proven French design (the Hebe, captured in 1782), she was built under the supervision of Sir Robert Seppings, Surveyor of the Navy, and represents the end of an era, as steam-powered vessels were already plying their trade (in the form of wooden paddle steamers) when she was launched.

Unicorn has a distinctive look – she has a much sturdier semi-circular stern than the square window-gallery type such as that on HMS Victory, providing less of a target to enemy gunners.

And her timbers, including her roof, are mostly original – possibly up to 90 per cent of the ship is as built – testament to her build quality, as there are only five intact ships older than her in the world, and she is probably the least modified of the lot.

Unicorn is also billed as the oldest British-built ship still afloat.

She has withstood the rigours of Scottish winters very well, but almost 200 years of exposure to seawater and rain has now caused her hull to hog, or sag, and plans for her future need to consider removing her from the water to preserve her further.

One option is to move her to the nearby East Graving Dock, though work would be needed on the dock itself, depending on the type of facilities which would be built round the old frigate.

She has also survived some fairly harsh treatment over the years – ship manager Robert Hovall recalls at least two occasions in recent years when the water has drained out on a low tide through a faulty gate, leaving Unicorn high and dry on the bed of the dock.

“Considering her age she is not in bad shape – there’s quite a lot of water damage to the outside of her hull, and cosmetically it is not very attractive and allows pigeons to nest in the holes as well,” said Robert.

“Other than that the rest of the ship is still relatively sound, as far

● (Right) Trincomalee’s guns run out of her gunports

as we know.

“She’s got quite a hog in her but she’s not at the stage where she would break her back – and if she went into dry dock, that would straighten it out as well.”

Robert said Unicorn deserves a higher profile in the city – although built in the South of England, she arrived on the Tay in November 1873, acting as a Reservist HQ for almost 100 years.

She was also a regional HQ in both world wars – a German submarine surrendered to the Senior Naval Officer on her in 1945, and on leaving the ship the executive officer of the U-boat

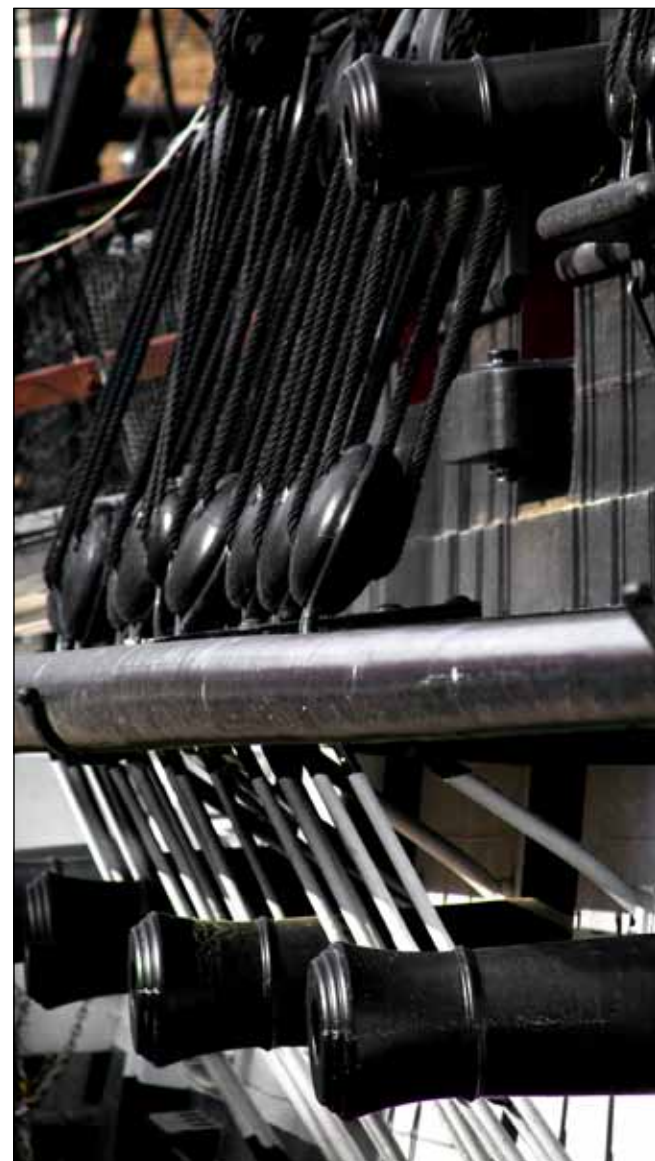
banged his head on the door frame, believed to be the only injury caused to the enemy by the ship.

Unicorn’s main income is through visitors – the ship is now affiliated to the National Museum of the Royal Navy, benefitting from the marketing and technical expertise of the wider organisation.

Items of interest on board include a scale model of Unicorn as she would have looked in commission, the original ship’s wheel, and lifesize cannon (the carriages are wooden but the barrels are fibreglass), and two small brass cannon belonging to Admiral Duncan, the local-born hero of Camperdown.

The ship also stages regular events such as jazz nights, and is can be booked for weddings, parties and the like.

Less than 150 miles to the south-east, frigate Trincomalee is sitting pretty in a purpose-built



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unes for sisters

home.

Visiting Hartlepool's Maritime Experience is like stepping onto a film set, and the cocoon of 18th Century-style seaport buildings has a dual purpose – providing an attractive setting as well as hiding the bulk of the ship from the outside world.

All that can be seen from most of the area is an enticing glimpse of fully-rigged masts, tempting the casual visitor to take a closer look.

And those who succumb are rewarded by the sight of a beautifully-restored 5th rate frigate with a wealth of supporting exhibitions and facilities.

Her current status is in part due to the drive of one man – Capt David Smith, one-time Commanding Officer of aircraft carrier HMS Eagle and chairman of the Foudroyant Trust in Portsmouth at the time the plug was pulled on the hulk's life as a youth training ship in the mid-1980s.

The Trust faced a stark choice – restoration or scuttling, though the latter would have been an unpopular decision.

Several yards expressed an interest in restoring her, including her birthplace in Bombay, but Hartlepool was at the head of the queue.

Having struggled in the aftermath of industrial decline in the 1970s, the town had benefitted economically from restoration work on the ironclad HMS Warrior 1860, and had the skills and a track record of good work to offer.

The deal was done, and Foudroyant – as she was then known – travelled by barge to the North East from Portsmouth in 1987, within a month of Warrior going the other way.

It gave Hartlepool an iconic and historic centrepiece to build a tourist economy around – the frigate had been based in the

town as a drill ship from 1862-77 – and local development funds supported the restoration alongside the Heritage Lottery Fund and private supporters.

She reverted to her original name in 1992, and by the end of a restoration project lasting more than a decade – and costing over £10m – the town had its icon.

Work included the early binning of more than 50 skips of non-original fittings, but despite the extensive work carried out, the ship still contains some 60 per cent of her original timber.

She has won accolades,

including a World Ship Trust Award, and is the second-oldest ship afloat in the world after USS Constitution.

Although still owned by the Trust, she is a full subsidiary of the National Museum of the Royal Navy, and her team work closely with the management of staff of the council-owned Maritime Experience – the ship and the quay are mutually supportive.

David Smith, who died in 2013, was a stickler for detail, and the restoration and ongoing maintenance of the frigate means

that old skills have been revived and developed – two apprentices from the Warrior restoration are now senior ship maintenance hands, and a third member of the team finished his apprenticeship earlier this year.

General Manager David McKnight said that visitor numbers have been rising recently, but the Trust has a responsibility to preserve a valuable ship as much as it has to maximise revenue.

David added that the ship's position in the community is such that local traders and suppliers are happy to provide competitively-priced work in order to be associated with Trincomalee. Indeed, some contractors also double as volunteer guides, having been smitten by the ship.

As the Trust looks towards the ship's bicentenary in 2017 her future looks assured.

That is in part down to creative thinking – a tour of the ship brings the Age of Sail vividly to life without some of the complications – her masts, for example, are steel and act as service cable conduits as well as housing fans to move air through the hull, keeping the frigate dry and sweet-smelling without losing her look of authenticity.

Unicorn's bicentenary is still some way off – but the clock is ticking...

www.frigateunicorn.org

www.hms-trincomalee.co.uk



● (Above) The wooden wall of HMS Unicorn – most of her oak hull is original material from the first quarter of the 19th Century, when she was built in Chatham; (left) the unicorn emblem on the prow of the frigate in Dundee; (right) Trincomalee in her Maritime Experience setting in Hartlepool; (below) the decorative transom stern of Trincomalee; (above right) Draught scale marks on a copper gauge the stern of Trincomalee

Pictures: HMS Trincomalee 1817 – Christopher Armstrong; HMS Unicorn – Mike Gray



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Edmonton awards

EDMONTON unit welcomed a former commanding officer to their annual prizegiving evening.

Guest of Honour was Lt Cdr (SCC) Keith Batchelor RNR, who had been CO for 20 years, retiring from the position more than 20 years ago.

Keith presented the award for Best Attendance in memory of his father, also a former CO at Edmonton.

The award for Best Uniform – a new award in memory of CPO (SCC) Ron Leighton, who died in April 2014 – went to OC Toni Thompson and was presented by Mr Allan Jones, who retired in 2014 after more than 25 years as the unit chairman.

Officer-in-Charge Lt (SCC) Mark Jones RNR presented Mr Jones with a certificate of long service from Captain Sea Cadets.

The Cadet of the Year was OC Thompson.

Cake bonanza

CADETS at Hornchurch & Upminster unit made and decorated fairy cakes for Red Nose Day, under the watchful eye of Lt (SCC) Sarah Butcher RNR, Officer-in-Charge, raising more than £40.

Burgee win

FOLKESTONE and Hythe unit and Royal Marines Cadet Detachment have been awarded a Burgee – the highest award that can be achieved by a unit – which was presented by Captain Sea Cadets Capt Jonathan Holloway.



● AC Freddie Wells of Thurrock unit waits anxiously for the results of a drill and piping competition – the Essex unit took second place at the local district level and came sixth in the area event



● The Sea Cadet Corps and the Royal Marines Band jointly performing a 'Beat Retreat'

Cadets are on song

SEA Cadet musicians from across the UK have taken to the stage for the first time with members of the Royal Marines Band Service (RMBS).

A group of 45 cadets were selected to attend a new course held at HMS Raleigh under the guidance of the Royal Marines Band Plymouth.

The cadets were given the chance to rehearse with the Plymouth Band as a marching contingent and as a concert band.

The week included a joint *Beat Retreat* with the Deputy Commandant General Royal Marines, Brig Richard Spencer, acting as the reviewing officer, and culminated in a concert performance when the bands took to the stage together.

Speaking prior to the concert, LC Jonathan Griffin said: "I've performed at concerts before, but never with a big concert band like this, so to perform alongside such fantastic musicians is different to anything I've experienced before. "We will be playing some slower pieces and then some up-beat ones, which are my favourite, and a lovely oboe solo played by our Director of Music."

The 16-year-old has been a member of the Poole unit for six years and has ambitions to join the RMBS in future.

He said: "This week has been a lot different to previous band courses I've attended."

"Undoubtedly it's been the best. It's been a great experience to see the different styles and range of ensembles that the band can do."

"There has been more emphasis on the concert side, which we couldn't really do before."

"We've had the military marching side, which has been

fantastic, but we've also had the sitting down concert playing style as well, which again is very different to what we've done before."

Trumpet player AC Bonita Deathridge, aged 15, from Sutton Coldfield, said: "The course has made me more confident and I think I've improved musically."

"The concert was really exciting, but I was also a little bit nervous. Overall it's been a great experience."

The course was organised by the Sea Cadet Corps in conjunction with the RMBS.

It allowed the Sea Cadet Corps Director of Music, Lt Cdr (SCC) Ali Bowen-Davies RNR, and her team to spot talent for the National Sea Cadet Band.

She said: "Working with the Royal Marines has been fantastic."

"The course has been very structured and the change in our cadets within just 48 hours of our

arrival was remarkable."

"Most of our cadets don't read music, they learn by repetition."

"This course has provided the cadets with the opportunity to look at their future career options, whether it be as a future member of the Band Service, Royal Navy or Commandos, and additionally allowed the Royal Marines Band Service to see the talent that's coming through the Sea Cadet Corps."

"Five out of six of the front rank of the Plymouth Band are former Sea Cadets, and that makes me very proud."

"They are remarkable people who have achieved so much, and to see them donate time back to an organisation that helped them get to where they are is amazing."

"I wonder how many seeds of aspiration have been sown this week by those who helped make it happen?"

The National Sea Cadet Band

draws its members from across the UK, and amongst its annual engagements is the National Trafalgar Day Parade in London.

Maj Jason Burcham, the Plymouth Band Director of Music, said: "This has been a superb opportunity for our two organisations to interact."

"The young musicians have clearly enjoyed their week with us, rehearsing and performing with the marching band, concert band and Corps of Drums."

"They have all applied themselves throughout and are rightly proud of their achievements in giving such impressive performances in a short space of time."

"They all have the potential to join the Royal Marines Band Service, and I hope that some may now be encouraged to consider a career with us and in the future we may see them wearing our uniform."



Old Viking is rejuvenated

ABINGDON unit have had their Viking powerboat for many years, but time had been taking its toll.

Slowly but surely it started to become beyond the capability of unit staff to maintain the boat (above left) – but all that has now changed.

The vessel has undergone an extensive refit, and cadets, staff and committee members at TS Marlborough would like to say a very big 'thank you' to Old Coombes Boatyard, of Smugglers Lane in Bosham, for completing their refit of the unit's

40-year-old powerboat (above right).

The boat plays a crucial role in teaching the cadets, aged between ten and 18, the skills of powerboating, up to Royal Yachting Association (RYA) Level One and Two standards.

The newly-refurbished boat will now be serviceable for many years to come.

Cadets and staff at Abingdon would also like to thank members of the unit management committee for fundraising to make the refit possible.

New boats for London

SEA Cadets across London are thrilled to have received four new RSTera sailing dinghies, delivered to their Welsh Harp boating station in North London, thanks to a considerable contribution from the Eric Twinn Trust.

Harrow and Richmond units applied to the trust to buy the sailing dinghies, and were successful in just under half of the funding to purchase four RS Tera sailing dinghies.

The new dinghies, from which all Sea Cadets across London will benefit, were put through their paces during the Easter holidays by juniors, aged 10-12, for beginner courses, and the boating station is organising a friendly race against other youth sailing clubs.

Final defeat

A TEAM of cadets from Whitehaven unit made it through to the national final of a five-a-side football tournament.

The Senior Girls team battled their way through the tournament, taking both the district and area trophies to win a place at the national finals which were held at RAF Cranwell in Lincolnshire.

The team won their first three games to get to the semi-finals against Northern Ireland, which they won 5-0.

Then it was on to the final against Southern Area.

In a hard-fought match, the two teams were neck-and-neck with one goal each, but Southern spotted an opportunity and in the closing seconds scored to make the final result 2-1.

Team coach PO (SCC) Jamie Mitchell was 'extremely pleased' with the team.

"They played well against some tough opposition and did very well to get to the final," he said.

"Unfortunately for us Southern Area just managed to score in the closing moments and took the title."

"The girls were a credit to themselves and Whitehaven," added the unit's Commanding Officer, Lt (SCC) Peter Lucas RNR.

"We are really proud of the standard they set and all they achieved, especially our own Cadet First Class Megan Batey, who was named Senior Girl Player of the Tournament."



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Churchill welcomes Churchill

WHEN American destroyer USS Winston S Churchill visited Portsmouth, she invited her Sea Cadet namesake – TS Churchill – to travel down from Kent for a guided tour of the ship.

A group of 19 lucky cadets and four staff from Ashford unit had the chance to discover first-hand what life on board an Arleigh Burke-class guided missile destroyer was like.

The tour took in such areas as the operations room and the bridge, where Ashford's CO, Capt (SCC) John Lewis RMR, and XO, Acting Sub Lt (SCC) Bruno D'Agostino RNR, took the cheeky opportunity to try out the corresponding CO's and XO's chairs.

Cadets and staff were also shown around the wardroom, where a collection of Churchill photographs and a picture painted by the great man himself are on display.

A photo opportunity was also jumped at by the Sea Cadets to have a photograph taken in front of the USS Winston S Churchill's main 5in gun, even though the weather was not exactly kind.

At the end of the tour the crew of the USS Winston S Churchill were presented with an engraved glass commemorating 70 years of the Ashford unit, a TS Churchill plaque and a TS Churchill cap tally as a thank-you for arranging the visit, which took more than a year of correspondence between ship and unit.

It seemed appropriate this year, being the 50th anniversary of the death of the wartime prime minister, that the two Churchills should get together and forge a transatlantic friendship.

Bronze wing flyers

A GROUP of 16 cadets from across the country gathered in the South of England in the pursuit of their 'Bronze Wing' on the Sea Cadet Aviation Course (SCAV).

And for one cadet, it was a chance to make his mark on a trophy which hints at some family history.

The course involves a mix of classroom lectures, visits and practical skills – a tough challenge for the candidates.

Lectures held at the Sea Cadet Training Centre at Weymouth included human factors, meteorology, communications, air law and principles of flight.

This was mixed with two days at RN Air Station Yeovilton, where 727 Naval Air Squadron's Operations Officer, Lt Matt Harding, had arranged a very busy schedule.

This included visits to 845 NAS – part of the Commando Helicopter Force – the Royal Navy's Historic Flight and the control tower, where cadets were able to watch air traffic controllers in action and receive briefings from tower staff and the duty meteorologists.



● Cadets are briefed in front of a Hawk jet

Unfortunately, the cadets were unable to fly because of strong crosswinds, but all have been promised air experience flights at either Yeovilton or Lee-on-the-Solent next month or July.

Sponsors supporting the course

this year included Pooley's Flight Equipment, Time Products UK Ltd (Sekonda) – with a rather nice watch presented to the top cadet – CAE Oxford Aviation Academy, BMAA, BGA, Crecy's Publishing, the Met Office and

Breitling UK.

As a result of his efforts on the course LC Cooper's name is now on the Daedalus Trophy – his grandfather was stationed at HMS Daedalus, and his father was born there 52 years ago.

Pitch perfect

ABERDEEN Sea Cadets joined Scottish Championship footballers on the pitch at the Petrofac Training Cup – formerly the Scottish Challenge Cup.

They walked alongside the players of Alloa and Livingston as they came onto the pitch St Johnstone's McDiarmid Park stadium in Perth, bearing the flag before the match started.

Five Aberdeen cadets were joined by children from Petrofac Training Services' employees and competition winners.

Alloa beat Rangers and Livingston won on penalties against Stranraer to reach the final, and it was Livingston who took the trophy 4-0.

Aberdeen CO PO (SCC) Peter Ritchie, said: "We are thrilled to have this opportunity, thanks to Petrofac Training Services."

He added: "Petrofac Training Services are long-standing supporters of Aberdeen Sea Cadets, with many employees also volunteering at the unit and other local ones."

Model presentations

THE CO of Dalbeattie unit managed to procure funding for Lego-style model kits of warships for her junior cadets.

Lt (SCC) Liz McVinnie RNR decided that junior cadets at the South Clyde District unit should build the models and then do some research in to the

ships before doing a presentation to the senior cadets, staff and parents at the unit's RN Parade.

The cadets were Murdo McQuarrie, Kieran Chisholm, Kyle Robb and Shaun McGinily, and the models they worked on included a destroyer, a frigate and a nuclear submarine.



● THE Sea Cadet Corps' new sail training ship TS Royalist is pictured during her first sea trials, ploughing through somewhat lumpy waters. The ship was named at a ceremony in the Astilleros Gondan shipyard in Northern Spain just before Christmas, and is expected to be ready for the 2015 offshore sailing season

Peterhead claim top prize

PETERHEAD unit has been awarded the Sea Cadet Corps' highest accolade, the Canada Trophy, after being named the top unit in the UK for the second time in their history.

The cadets were presented with the trophy during a special event held at the end of March.

Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland Rear Admiral John Clink presented the award to the unit's Officer in Charge, Sub Lt (SCC) John Bowman RNR.

During the evening every cadet was presented with a commemorative medal and badge to wear on their uniform for the duration of their time in the Corps.

Commenting on the unit's achievement, Sub Lt Bowman said: "This is a fantastic result for a small unit in the North East of Scotland when you consider there are in excess of 400 units nationwide."

"I am immensely proud of our cadets, adult volunteer team and unit management committee, who give their time freely and willingly for the young people of Peterhead and surrounding areas."

On a very proud night, the adult volunteers and cadets showcased the unit's achievements over the past year to a group of invited guests, including local business leaders and dignitaries who all show their support for the cadets.

The Canada Trophy is seen as the pinnacle of achievement in the Corps.

The trophy was originally presented by the Navy League of Canada for competition in the Sea Cadet Corps to commemorate the first visit of Canadian Sea Cadets to Great Britain in 1947.

It is awarded annually to the unit which is considered to have attained the very highest standard of all-round efficiency in the previous year.

The unit is currently trying to raise £150,000 to replace its leaking roof and upgrade the unit headquarters in order to continue to open its doors for training.

● (Right) FOSNNI Rear Admiral John Clink presents the Canada Trophy to Sub Lt (SCC) John Bowman (RNR)

● (Below) Rear Admiral Clink presents medals and badges



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Respects to be paid to Natal

A WARTIME disaster in home waters is to be commemorated in Scotland in September.

The loss of armoured cruiser **HMS Natal** on December 30 1915 in a sudden explosion resulted in the death of as many as 421 people, including at least three female nurses who had been invited on board for a film party.

The ship had been at anchor with the 2nd Cruiser Squadron in the relatively safe haven of Cromarty Firth at the end of 1915 when her Commanding Officer, Cdr Eric Black, hosted a film party.

Among those invited were the wives and children of officers, a civilian friend of the CO, and nurses from the nearby hospital ship **Drina**.

Shortly before 3.30pm, without any warning, the ship was riven by a series of explosions, and she capsized within five minutes.

The ten-year-old warship had a normal complement of over 700, but some were away on Christmas leave while others were ashore at a football match, which reduced the death toll.

Suspensions that a German torpedo or mine were responsible were quickly dispelled when divers determined that the explosions were internal, and it is thought that unstable cordite could have been to blame.

The Invergordon Heritage and Naval Museum plans to hold a centenary anniversary memorial service followed by a wreath-laying ceremony over the site of the wreck on September 30.

That date marks the 110th anniversary of the ship's launch in Barrow-in-Furness, as the date of the sinking itself would be problematic – it would fall at the height of the festive season celebrations, the weather would be less kind and the day very much shorter.

The service will be held at 12.30pm at the Church of Scotland in Castle Road, Invergordon.

Cromarty Firth Port Authority will be providing a pilot boat for the wreath-laying ceremony which follows, and the RNLI are also hoping to attend, unless duty calls.

Local sailors in private boats will also be welcome to join the ceremony.

The Invergordon Museum displays an extensive number of artefacts from **HMS Natal**, and will be open for visitors on the day, with volunteers available to answer any questions.

www.invergordonmuseum.co.uk

Soapy wins

LEE-on-the-Solent and Stubbington branch have held their third AGM since commissioning.

Branch Shipmate of the Year was Soapy Watson.

The branch also had a successful year raising money for charity, and agreed to split the £900 raised between the RNRMC, SSAFA, RNRM Widows, Hounds for Heroes and the National Coastguard Watch in Lee-on-the-Solent.

RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.

admin@royalnavalassoc.com

023 9272 3747

www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

Japanese mercy missions celebrated

LIFESAVING mercy missions to Japanese prisoners-of-war 70 years ago have been remembered with international gratitude three generations down the line.

As the war in the Far East was ending in August 1945, aircraft from Royal Navy aircraft carrier **HMS Indefatigable** were on a reconnaissance mission to identify PoW camps on mainland Japan.

They identified a camp at Yokkaichi, almost 200 miles east of Tokyo, and immediately the ship's company, to a man, contributed all they could, even though their own supplies were running low.

The assembled packages of medical supplies, food, cigarettes and other items were then dropped on to the camp on makeshift parachutes.

There was a high element of risk in such missions because even though the Japanese had surrendered it was by no means certain that everyone had got the message – indeed, the Fleet

was still being attacked by rogue suicide pilots.

All went well, however, despite some of the packages falling on the Japanese guards' latrines...

Among the PoWs was a Dutch Serviceman, Fred Baumeister, who had been captured in March 1942.

In the past four years research by his daughter, Irene Kusnadi-Baumeister, with help from her late father's diaries, led her not only to the **Indefatigable**, source of those mercy flights, but also to some of the aircrew who delivered them, and to the families of some of her father's fellow prisoners.

One of them was American Serviceman Ira Alden Sargent, and at this year's annual reunion in Portsmouth of the **HMS Indefatigable Association**, as well as Irene and her husband Leo, special overseas guests included three generations of the Sargent family – Ira Alden's daughter Nancy Sargent-Johnson, her niece Sarah Sargent and her grand-daughter Josilin.

Nancy said the supply drops



● From left, Sarah Sargent, Nancy Sargent-Johnson, Josilin and Irene Kusnadi-Baumeister with Bill Jones, one of the surviving aircrew involved in the mercy missions

were genuine lifesavers, as many prisoners were at the end of their tether and some close to death.

Aircraft from **HMS Indefatigable** were involved in

what was believed to be the last British air combat in World War 2 as the **Implacable**-class carrier was involved in Allied occupation plans.

Blue plaque marks birthplace of VC submarine commander

A THIRD blue plaque commemorating heroic submariners has been unveiled in South London.

The plaque, part of a **Submariners Association** initiative, was unveiled on the birthplace of Lt Cdr Martin Nasmith VC in Castelnau, Barnes, last month.

Some 60 guests, including members of the Dunbar-Nasmith family and friends and relatives of Simon and Katie Cooper (owners of the property), joined veteran and serving submariners including Rear Admiral Submarines, Rear Admiral Matthew Parr, for the ceremony.

The commemoration service was led by the Revd David Cooke, of St Helen's Holy Trinity, Barnes.

Submariners Association chairman S/M Jim McMaster welcomed everybody to the event, and president Admiral Sir James Perowne gave a detailed description of Lt Cdr Nasmith's career and the deed which led to his award of the VC.

This was followed by the unveiling of the plaque by the Admiral and Mr Cooper.

Lt Cdr Nasmith was born April 1 1883 and educated at Eastman's Royal Naval Academy, Winchester, and **HMS Britannia** at Dartmouth.

He joined the Royal Navy at the age of 14 in 1897, achieving the rank of lieutenant in 1904.

It was during World War 1, that at the age of 32 and when in command of **HMS E11**, that he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Between May 20 and June 8 1915 he went through the heavily-guarded Dardanelles, which included minefields, batteries and gunboats and enter the Sea of Marmara, where he destroyed a Turkish gunboat, two transports, an ammunition ship, three store ships and four other vessels.

During his exit from the area, when he had safely passed



● The newly-unveiled plaque outside the birthplace of Lt Cdr Martin Nasmith VC in Barnes, London

the most difficult part of his homeward journey, he received information that a cargo of coal – essential for the morale of the city – was heading towards Istanbul. Nasmith turned back.

When the coal ship came into sight of the docks, a welcoming committee of municipal Turkish grandees soon formed, along with a happy crowd – water, electricity and rail transport had all suffered due to a lack of coal.

Hardly had the ship berthed than it blew up before the eyes of the astounded crowd. Nasmith successfully slipped out again...

Nasmith conducted combat operations in the Sea of Marmara for a three-month period.

When his torpedoes ran low, he set them to float at the end of their run, so he could recover them should they fail to hit a target.

At one point, he captured a dhow, lashed it to the conning tower of **E11** as camouflage, and went on to capture an ammunition

ship using small arms.

His penetration of the Golden Horn was the first time an enemy ship had done so in over 500 years, and he also attacked a railway viaduct.

Nasmith's First Lieutenant, Guy D'Oyly-Hughes, and Second Lieutenant, Robert Brown, were awarded the DSC, and the rest of the crew were awarded the DSM.

Nasmith was promoted to Commander immediately and to Captain a year later, and later in the war, Nasmith was in charge of the Seventh Submarine Flotilla in the Baltic and Senior Naval Officer at Reval (later Tallinn).

He was captain of **HMS Iron Duke** 1921–24, and appointed Commandant of the Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, in 1926, also holding the office of Aide-de-Camp to King George V between 1927 and 28.

Appointed Rear Admiral Submarines from 1929–31, and became Commander-in-Chief of

the East Indies Station in 1932 and invested as KCB in 1934.

He held the office of Second Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Personnel in 1935, and at the outbreak of war he was Commander-in-Chief, Plymouth and Western Approaches 1938–41.

He served as Flag Officer in charge of London from 1942 and retired in 1946.

The unveiling ceremony was concluded by the chairman presenting the Coopers with a Submariners Association crest, a book of submariners' poems, a set of Dolphins and a framed picture containing a copy of the birth certificate of Nasmith.

The Dunbar-Nasmith family also presented Simon and Katie Cooper with a picture containing three photographs, one of **E11** returning from patrol, the crew of **E11** and a copy of the first periscope picture taken by Nasmith with a Box Brownie camera.

V&W men look to the future

IN 1993 the V & W Destroyer Association had several hundred members, but there were only five veterans at this year's annual reunion in Harrogate in March, and most were in their 90s.

S/M 'Stormy' Fairweather, the chairman, was unable to make it, and 96-year-old S/M Ron Rendle (torpedoed twice) stood in.

Most of the 30 men and women at Harrogate were wives or associate members – the sons and daughters of veterans who had served on one of the 69 V & W-class destroyers built at the end of World War 1 and scrapped at the end of World War 2.

The stories told by the veterans in their magazine *Hard Lying* were republished by Stormy Fairweather as a book.

At last year's reunion members backed the development of a website so that the V & Ws will continue to sail through time and space on the Internet long after they have crossed the bar.

The website is being developed by Bill Forster, whose father served in **HMS Venomous**, and Vic Green, whose father was in **HMS Worcester**, but editors are being sought to create linked sites for each of the V & Ws.

Frank Donald was the first to volunteer – his father was killed on the bridge of **HMS Vimy** while evacuating troops from Boulogne on May 23 1940 when Frank was just a few months old.

The website is based on articles from *Hard Lying* and interviews with veterans recorded by Bill Forster at reunions, but will include links to material elsewhere, and contributions from veterans and families are welcomed.

Prince Philip, the patron of the association, and who served on the V & W class leader **HMS Wallace**, sent a message welcoming the development of the website, which was read out at the reunion in Harrogate and can be seen on the website www.vandwdestroyerassociation.org.uk/index.html

Please get in touch if you would like to help or contribute photographs or stories – Bill can be contacted at venomous@hollywellhousepublishing.co.uk

Plymwick's in Berwick

WHEN Type 12 frigate **HMS Plymouth** sailed to Gibraltar for a refit in the mid-1970s, sister ship **HMS Berwick** was just emerging from the yard.

Plymouth's ship's company, under Cdr Peter Hames, transferred en masse to Berwick – and the composite name **Plymwick** came into existence for sailors who served in both ships.

With a little help from *Navy News* a reunion was held in September 2013 which saw 35 Plymwick's gather for the first time in almost 40 years.

A second reunion is planned for September 11–13 this year, and it is hoped that attendance might be even better this time – the organisers have a mailing list of 60, almost a quarter of the former ship's company.

But before that the Plymwick's may be taking part in celebrations on the Scottish border.

This summer Berwick-upon-Tweed, the most northerly town in England, celebrates the 900th anniversary of the granting of its Charter of Incorporation.

A parade will be held on June 27 to commemorate the town's relations with the Armed Forces.

Having heard about the celebrations, Capt Hames contacted the co-ordinator of the programme, and was delighted to receive an invitation for a party of Plymwick's to take part.

Portland welcomes namesake

DEVONPORT-based frigate HMS Portland has strengthened her ties with their namesake RNA branch when the Commanding Officer and Executive Warrant Officer were invited to the Portland shipmates' annual dinner.

Commanding Officer Capt Simon Asquith and WO Steve Thorpe, accompanied by their wives, were hosted by branch president S/M Dick Barton and his fellow members.

Capt Asquith said: "It was a great honour to be invited to speak at the annual dinner of such a strongly-supported and vibrant branch of the RNA."

"It was fantastic to have this opportunity to strengthen our ties with the Portland RNA, who were excellent hosts and made us feel very welcome."

The ship's company of the Type 23 frigate will host members of the RNA branch on board the warship when an affiliates-at-sea day is held in later in the year.

Farewell Molly

SHIPMATES at Bexhill branch are mourning the death of a centenarian colleague.

S/M Molly Hickie, who turned 100 last August, died on February 17.

She joined the WRNS in 1943, serving at HM ships Kestrel (RNAS Worthy Down), Royal Arthur (Skegness) and Beehive.

In 1946 she joined NP1749 in Hamburg, remaining in Germany until 1947.

Molly had worked as a governess in Germany before the war, and saw the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin.

Her family managed to get her to Ostend, where she had to spend the night on the beach as she was too late for the ferry.

Molly, who went on to train as a kennel maid, was a founder member of Bexhill branch.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our March edition (right) was cruiser HMS Ajax, and it is in Ontario, Canada, that the town of Ajax – named in her honour – can be found.

The correct answers were provided by Mr B Pepprell of Haverfordwest, who wins our £50 prize.

This month's submarine (above), was launched on the Mersey just months after the end of World War 2.

Named after a hero in Greco-Roman mythology, the boat saw nearly 30 years service with the RN, being scrapped in 1974.

Before she met her end, she appeared in a James Bond film in the 1960s as the fictitious M1.

1) What was the name of the submarine, and 2) what was the name of the 007 film in which she appeared?

We have removed her pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send

MYSTERY PICTURE 243

Name

Address

My answers: (1).....

(2).....

Open invitation to Whitehall parade

IT MIGHT be organised by the RNA, but the Biennial March to the Cenotaph in London in the autumn will be a Naval family affair.

General Secretary S/M Paul Quinn said that the high-profile event, on September 6, is not a parade for the RNA, but a parade for Naval associations.

"I will be delighted to see them and their standards parading,"

said S/M Quinn.

"They can turn up on the day and march – weather dependent – but it is best if the RNA knows beforehand for security purposes."

S/M Quinn added that any serving sailors or veterans who would like a medal presented – perhaps an operational medal, a long service award or an Arctic Star – should also get in touch with the Association to sort out

particular arrangements.

Those who would like to park close to the parade in Whitehall Place will need to apply well in advance for a permit, again through RNA HQ.

Plans are now well-advanced for the day.

Sea Cadet bands from Herne Hill and Poole units will be providing music, while shore bases HMS Sultan and HMS Collingwood will be sending platoons of sailors for the parade.

Contingents of overseas veterans have become staunch supporters of the event in recent years, and the 2015 parade will include Irish, Dutch and Belgian representation.

RNA officials would like to see the parade evolve into a Naval

Associations' parade; the CONA organisation – the Conference of Naval Associations – is now 41 strong, and it is hoped that a good many of those groups will also be there on the day.

The Biennial Parade dates back to the early 1950s, when the RNA held its national conferences every other year at the Royal Albert Hall.

The Association was permitted to march to the Cenotaph on the Sunday as part of the weekend's programme.

Over the years the two events became separated – the conference became an annual event and was held at different locations around the country while the parade continued to be staged every two years.

Aviation support

RAY Burrows, chairman of the Ulster Aviation Society, received a cheque from Limavady branch chairman S/M Ray Cook and treasurer S/M John Pudney.

The money was raised at the branch's annual quiz in memory of former shipmate John Hartin.

The Ulster Aviation Society is currently in the process of bringing an ex-Royal Navy Phantom (XT864) from RAF Leuchars in Scotland to add to their collection of Naval aircraft, which they believe is probably

the largest collection outside the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton.

Their current aircraft include a Grumman Wildcat, Hawker Seahawk, Fairey Gannet and Blackburn Buccaneer, with the Phantom to come, thus covering many decades of Naval aviation.

All are housed in their hangars at the former World War 2 airfield at Long Kesh in Co Down, Northern Ireland.

www.ulsteraviationsociety.org



Bluebell finds new home in Runcorn

A RAYLEIGH branch member has handed a labour of love over to a museum in Cheshire for safekeeping.

S/M Gary Daisley presented an Arctic Convoy diorama of Flower-class corvette HMS

Bluebell (pictured above) to S/M Dave Wright of Runcorn branch, who is Area 10 Secretary.

Also there for the ceremony was S/M Chris Dovey, National Chairman of the association.

S/M Daisley had launched an appeal in the RNA's *Semaphore Circular* to any RNA branch or CONA association to find anyone who would be able to place the Bluebell model on permanent display.

After representations by John Soanes (Ton Class Association and Torbay branch) on behalf of the Marshlands Maritime Museum in King's Lynn and Robert Fosterjohn (Petersfield branch) on behalf of the Petersfield Town Museum, the decision was made that the final resting place for the Bluebell would be with Runcorn branch, at the Runcorn Royal British Legion Museum.

The 'permanent loan' exchange took place at the Nautical Club in Birmingham in late March during the Area 8 AGM.

The venue was chosen as the ideal location, halfway between Essex and Cheshire, where S/M Brian Goodwin made everyone welcome on behalf of the Nautical Club.

The model itself has taken roughly two years and hundreds of man-hours to complete, said S/M Gary, and it is only fitting that she now has a permanent place on display as his tribute to those who served and suffered during the Arctic Convoys of World War 2.

Launched in April 1940, HMS Bluebell served in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Arctic campaigns, escorting several convoys to Russia, and also took part in the invasions of Sicily and France.

She was torpedoed and sunk by U-711 in the Kola Inlet in February 1945 while escorting convoy RA-64 from Murmansk, and sank in less than 30 seconds.

It is thought only 12 of her ship's company of more than 80 survived.

Subs and Scotland on agenda

THE agenda for the RNA National Conference at the Grand Burstin Hotel in Folkestone next month has been issued – and an old chestnut has made a reappearance amongst the six motions put forward for discussion.

The cost of belonging to the RNA used to spark an annual debate at Conference, but subscriptions have not risen since the £10 level was set ten years ago.

National Council motion number 4, seconded by Tyne branch, suggests that annual subs should be increased to £15 for UK full and associate members, and £7.50 for overseas members.

By way of explanation, the National Council states that the move "is to restore the value of subscriptions eroded by inflation."

A second motion which is of particular note is Branch Motion Number 2, put forward by Forth Valley branch and seconded by City of Inverness, which states that "the Scottish Area proposes holding the 2017 Conference in the Area at a venue to be confirmed later."

The Scottish Area adds it will abide by the guidance set out in the Conference Guidelines.

Shipmates planning to drive to Kent for the Conference, which will be held on Saturday June 20, are reminded that when you arrive at the Grand Burstin Hotel, which is situated on the seafloor, it is vital that you let the front desk know your vehicle registration to prevent unnecessary charges.



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● LCH John Sheedy

Serving up top honour

A ROYAL Navy submariner based at HM Naval Base Clyde has been unanimously voted 'man of the patrol' by his shipmates.

LCH John Sheedy, 29, has been the head chef in HMS Vanguard since August 2013 and has made an incalculable difference to the well-being and good morale of the ship's company.

John has the vitally important job of helping to keep the crew's morale high by providing a balanced diet during deterrent patrol.

In February last year he attended the Waitrose cookery school in London, later going on to feature in the supermarket chain's in-store magazine describing the challenges associated with submarine catering.

He also attended commemorations for WW1 mariners in Bridlington and completed a Land's End to John O'Groats cycle ride with other crew members, raising cash for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

"It is a tremendous honour to be voted HMS Vanguard 'man of the patrol'," said John.

"To be awarded man of the boat was a complete surprise to me. It means a lot to me that I am held in such high regard by my fellow submariners."

Maestro of music

THE Royal Marines School of Music held the final of the Royal Marines Young Musician of the Year Competition, the Cassel Prize.

The competition began in January when 26 musicians began the battle to become the winner of the title. After several competitive rounds seven of the brightest and the best musicians from the Royal Marines School of Music performed an evening of solo performances, in a packed auditorium at the Royal Marines Museum in Southsea.

Guest judge Sara Raybould, Director of the London College of Music, together with Lt Col Nick Grace, Principal Director of Music Royal Marines, announced Musn Alasdair Chatterton as winner of the coveted title.

Musn Chatterton, 20, who began training at the Royal Marines School of Music in 2013, gave three stunning performances on percussion.

He said: "It was an exciting and terrifying experience playing in front of so many people. I didn't think I'd win, not for a second, and the other finalists were absolutely outstanding. It was a brilliant night, and one I won't forget."

In a spectacular finale to the night's events Gordon Campbell, Lead Trombonist of the BBC Big Band, led the School of Music with some Big Band classics.



● Cdr Peter Laughton with his daughter Jessica in HMS Lancaster

Picture: LA(PHOT) Des Wade

Navigating way home in US ship

A ROYAL Navy officer – serving onboard the USS Winston S Churchill – returned to home shores when her ship visited Portsmouth.

Lt Lynsey Sewell, pictured right, is the Navigating Officer onboard the American destroyer which is escorting the 100,000 tonne aircraft carrier, USS Theodore Roosevelt.

Five months into a two-year tour with the US Navy, Lynsey was on the Bridge navigating the ship into the familiar waters of the Solent for the rare visit.

Churchill is the only US Navy vessel to have a Royal Navy officer permanently assigned to the ship's company as well as flying a foreign nation's ensign. Lt Sewell is the ninth Royal Navy officer to have served onboard.

A native of Edinburgh, Lynsey joined the Royal Navy just over nine years ago as a University Cadet, studying Maritime Business. She was starting her navigating career when she was offered the position with the US Navy.

"My previous captain recommended me for the selection board and I was honoured



when I was offered the position. However, as this was at the very start of my Fleet Navigating Officer's course it somewhat increased the pressure to do well," she said.

After a month at the Surface Warfare Officer School, in Rhode Island, the 27-year-old joined the Winston S Churchill.

"It has taken several months to be able to sit down and understand a full conversation at the dinner table but now that I have come to terms with US Navy terminology and rank structure the two navies seem more similar than I initially believed," she said.

"The biggest similarities between our navies are the drive, determination and

friendliness of the people. "The biggest difference is the sheer size of the US Navy. It has been exciting to train with so many platforms on a routine basis."

After her time with the Churchill, Lynsey hopes to return to the Royal Navy and pursue a teaching role or become the Executive Officer in a Fishery Protection Vessel.



● Baellee Wigin and his father Simon

Following mum and dad

A TEENAGED Royal Navy recruit from Malvern stands proudly in uniform for the first time with his father, who is also in the Service.

Trainee Warfare Specialist Baellee Wigin, 19, embarked on his Naval career in January, arriving at the gates of HMS Raleigh for his basic training. By coincidence his father, CPO Simon Wigin, is also serving at the training base in Torpoint as one of the instructors.

During an intensive ten-week course Baellee was taught the basic skills he will rely upon throughout his time in the Royal Navy. The course culminated

with the passing-out-parade, attended by families and friends, when Baellee and Simon stood side-by-side in uniform for the first time.

Baellee, a former pupil of Dyson Perrins Church of England Academy, said: "It was always my ambition to join the Armed Forces. My mum Amanda was also in the Navy for eight years. I want to see the world and follow in my parents' footsteps. Among my highlights of training was passing my final kit muster."

"I also really enjoyed the trek across Dartmoor. The sense of achievement was immense after completing such

a physical and demanding task. Afterwards I rewarded myself by polishing off a 48oz steak."

Simon, 42, joined the Royal Navy in 1991 and is currently passing on his vast experience to recruits undergoing the second stage of training at the Defence Maritime Logistics School based at HMS Raleigh.

"Baellee's mum and I are immensely proud of what he has achieved over the last ten weeks," he said. "It was truly an amazing feeling watching my son become a young sailor."

Baellee's next port of call is HMS Collingwood.

Children hop aboard to experience life at sea

PRIMARY schoolchildren took a trip to Portsmouth Naval Base to see for themselves what life is like on board a Royal Navy warship.

Twenty four excited pupils from Funtington Primary School, West Sussex, were lucky enough to be invited to the Type 23 frigate HMS Lancaster just before she sailed for a nine-month deployment.

The group toured the ship, including visits to the bridge, operations room and upper decks. What made the trip even more exciting was travelling to the Naval base in a special, Royal Navy-themed bus bearing the same name as the ship. The HMS Lancaster bus is one of 26 buses in the Star Fleet all named after Royal Navy ships.

Each of the iconic buses is painted with a silhouette of the relevant vessel and a list of its key facts and figures on the exterior. The bus company has embraced the connection with the Royal Navy and previously provided buses from the Star Fleet's corresponding ship for family days and homecomings.

Commanding Officer Cdr Peter Laughton said: "It really was great fun to host some of the children from Funtington

Primary School, including my daughter, onboard for a ship's tour. They all had a superb time and will no doubt follow our deployment with even greater interest over the next nine months."

"This school trip was sponsored by First Bus who provided the HMS Lancaster-themed bus to transport the children to and from the ship. This was a fabulous example of the Armed Forces Community Covenant in play with both First Bus and Funtington School supporting our Armed Forces and proudly promoting the maritime heritage of Portsmouth."

A Royal Navy Wildcat helicopter landed in the school grounds, the day before their ship visit, for pupils to see up close what the state-of-the-art new helicopter looked like and learn how it would support the ship on operations.

Headteacher Sarah Titley said: "We are delighted that the children at Funtington have been given this exciting opportunity to experience the Navy Wildcat helicopter and HMS Lancaster; learning a bit about how they both work and meeting the crew. These events will create long-lasting memories for the children."

Whale for Whale Island



ARTIST Mark Kellett's latest work at HMS Excellent is a mural of Moby Dick on the wall at Moby Dick's, an all-ranks bar at Whale Island, Portsmouth.

Mark also completed a painting in tribute to HMS Pickle in the Senior Rates' Mess and supervised students from South Downs College when they completed a mural about the Falklands Conflict.

Keeping it in the family

THE Royal Navy's new Second Sea Lord visited HMS Raleigh during his first week in his new post.

Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock, a former Commanding Officer of the training base in Torpoint, spent the day at Raleigh where he met some of the Royal Navy's latest recruits.

The Second Sea Lord also formally opened the establishment's newly-refurbished Roebuck lecture theatre and took the salute at the passing-out-parade for the Hanson 23 entry, who began training in January.

"It is just fantastic to be back at HMS Raleigh meeting our latest group of sailors beginning their Naval careers. The Royal Navy has never had such an exciting future and the men and women I've met today are all up for the challenges that come with a Naval life."

During the parade Vice Admiral Woodcock presented medals to members of HMS Raleigh's ship's company, recognising long service.

Among the recipients was CPO Tony Brown, from Camborne, who became the third of three brothers to receive a Long Service and Good Conduct (LS&GC) medals.

Tony's brothers, CPOs Rob and Billy Brown, were at HMS Raleigh to see their sibling collect his medal. They were presented with their LS&GC medals in 2013. Tony and Rob are currently serving in Raleigh, while Billy is on the staff of Flag Officer Sea Training in Plymouth.

Pupils rise to Navy engineer challenge

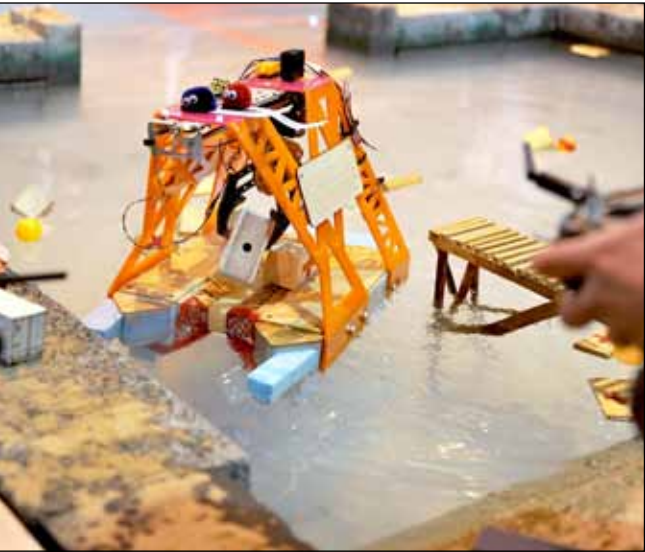
HMS Sultan welcomed more than 300 youngsters from across the nation to take part in the Royal Navy University Training College young engineers challenge – Operation Tempest 2015.

Held in partnership with UTC, Young Engineers and BAE Systems, the challenge encourages young people into science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Themed around the Royal Navy's role of providing disaster relief, the students were tasked with designing a boat capable of clearing items from the surface and seabed of a small West Indian island's harbour following a severe hurricane, so that a safe passage for relief can be created.

Students enjoyed a number of interactive displays around the main competition within Newcomen Hangar and were also treated to the added bonus of tours of DCTT's other training facilities within the Defence School of Marine Engineering(DSMarE) where they got to look at gas turbines and diesel engines in motion.

Within a display of industry apprentices up to the age of 25, RNAESS and DSMarE students were put up against competitors from the Weapons Engineering Training Group(WETG), HMS Collingwood and competition



● Solent Salvagers' prize-winning design. Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

sponsors BAE Systems with the WETG entry 'Collingwood Crazy Boaters' proving the most efficient model.

Following the competition, 11 awards were presented by VIPs in the following categories: for the most effective harbour clearance, best design and construction, best presentation, best valiant effort and best theme.

In the 16-18 category of the competition, team Solent

Salvagers from Bay House School, Gosport, achieved a double award scooping the Best Design and Construction and Best Overall performance.

Team member Daniel Ellis, 18, said: "We were quite surprised to win as our first two runs were really difficult as in the first run we sank and in the second our propellers fell off. We had actually packed up thinking we would be going home so

WINNERS

Valiant effort – HMS UTC

Best themed team – Elutec Double Dolphin

Best Presentation Group 1 (14-16) – Brune Park

Best Presentation Group 2 (16-18) – HMS Hercules

Best Design and Construction Group 1 – Fathers of Crane

Best Design and Construction Group 2 – Solent Salvagers

Runner Up Group 1 – Brune Park

Overall Winner Group 1 – Fathers of Crane

Runner Up Group 2 – Finding Nemo

Overall Winner Group 2 – Solent Salvagers

Overall Winner Group 3 (Industry) – Collingwood Crazy Boaters

Double delight for ship

TWO Royal Navy sailors have been presented with an award from their Plymouth-based warship HMS Somerset.

LH Peter Bartlett-Horwood, 28, has received the Winner of Warfare Branch award during a ceremony in Devonport Naval Base that recognised the achievements of personnel on board the Type 23.

He received the award for his leadership skills in the operations room, especially during a recent period of vital operations where his performance was exemplary.

LET Robert Wilson, 34, received the Whole Ship Prize. He was chosen by Lt Cdr Thomas Boeckz, who said: "It was hard to single out an individual in a ship's company that is so strong; but his attitude, enthusiasm, professionalism and willingness to help anyone show what is best about the Royal Navy and HMS Somerset."

The ship's commanding officer Cdr Michael Wood said: "Of all the tasks that I have, nothing gives me greater pleasure than recognising the tremendous achievements of my people."

Peter, from Exeter, said: "To receive this award was a shock to say the least. Within two years of being in the Navy I've received my two awards including the warfare department efficiency award."

Robert, who lives in Plymouth, has been in the Royal Navy for 12 years. His role on board HMS Somerset is to monitor and maintain her main gun and other automatic armed systems, firing rounds from 10cm to one metre long.

Icing on the cake for ET

A YOUNG sailor, who lost nine stone to join the Royal Navy, made two dreams a reality by proposing to his girlfriend on the day of his "pass out".

ET Mike Edwards surprised girlfriend Lucy Ambridge by proposing to her at the School of Naval Engineering HMS Sultan, in Hampshire, when he passed out as a Marine Engineer.

It has been an amazing journey for Mike who slimmed down from 21st 7 pounds (137 kg) to a fit and healthy 12st 7 pounds (79 kg) in order to fulfil one dream – joining the Senior Service.

And when he got down on bended knee in front of family, friends and colleagues he was hoping to make his second dream a reality by having Lucy agree to marry him.

Lucy, a 23-year-old Plymouth restaurant supervisor originally from Solihull, Birmingham, said: "I had no idea what he was up to. I was simply speechless when he showed me the ring but I knew what he meant and was incredibly happy."

The 23-year-old sailor from Paignton, Devon, added: "I threw her off the trail completely and when I went to ask her I could barely open my mouth."

Growing up in Devon Mike knew he wanted to join the Armed Forces from a young age but opted for a gap year before



● ET Mike Edwards with fiancée Lucy Ambridge and, below, how he looked before his weight loss

making any decisions – it was then that his weight ballooned.

At the age of 19 he was 21st when he submitted his Royal Navy application and so began his incredible weight loss regime in order to make that dream a reality.

By cutting out fast food and sticking to a strict fitness regime the pounds started falling and he was accepted for basic training.

Mike will shortly sail off on deployment in his first warship.



Epic walk for fish and chips

TWELVE Clyde sailors braved the midgies and the elements when they participated in a team-building trek of the West Highland Way.

The 12, consisting of ten personnel from Superintendent Fleet Maintenance (SFM), along with a participant from HMS Neptune Medical Centre and one from Waterfront Manning, set off from Milngavie for the epic journey.

Over five days the group pushed themselves to the limit and put their leadership, problem-solving and group management skills to the test.

Sub Lt Ian McInnes said: "The first stage, from Milngavie to Balmaha, was particularly challenging as the weather was against us. By the time we reached Conic Hill on the east shore of Loch Lomond the winds had reached 80 miles per hour.

"Although the weather improved on day two this was arguably the hardest part of the trek. The Balmaha to Inverarnan route was particularly challenging terrain."

The team finished at Fort William with a well-deserved fish supper and a restful weekend.



WELFARE

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Demanding but very rewarding

FIVE months into 2015 and we're still as busy as ever funding projects for serving personnel and issuing grants to charities that address the increasingly complex needs of both current and former sailors and marines, and their dependants.

In fact over the last year we've seen requests for funding to the charity soar, in nearly all facets of our work.

This is both incredibly rewarding and demanding in equal measure. Rewarding because we know that more money is going out of the door to people and projects in need – and demanding because while we're increasing the amount of money we donate, we need to raise more to keep up the same level of impact.

Addressing the needs of our Service personnel is a daily routine and one that I enjoy immensely.

As a former Wren I've also seen the changing face of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines from both inside and outside the wire. I've seen the changing pressures in family life and recognise how important it is to keep morale high in the toughest of times. Now, as a civilian, I can relate to life on 'Civvy Street' and the stresses that everyday life can bring.

While sometimes in our team it feels like we are too busy awarding grants to take in the full impact of our work, all it takes is one letter, phone call or photo from someone whose life has truly been turned around for us to look back and remind ourselves 'this is why we do what we do'.

From the veterans who are dealing with health, work, housing or financial problems to the husbands, wives and children who simply need pointing in the right direction, it never fails to amaze me how vital a service we provide to those who need it most.

As the year goes on, I look forward to sharing further positive stories with you in these pages.

Anne Carr
Head of Grants
The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity



● The Plymouth Drake Foundation has received a grant from the RNRMC, which also supports former personnel such as Arctic Convoy veteran Albert Young



Thanks a million – or two

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) has issued over £2.4m in funding to 26 charities that support Naval Service personnel, veterans and their families across the UK.

Each charity plays a vital role supporting sailors and Royal Marines by carrying out projects that, for example, provide emotional and financial assistance to their children and dependants.

Other schemes will see older and disabled ex-Servicemen and women assisted with transitioning into employability after life in the Service, or help them cope with combat-related stress or physical ailments.

The number of applicants seeking financial support from the principal charity of the Royal Navy represents the largest ever, increasing by 15 per cent over the same period last year.

Robert Robson, Chief Executive Officer of the RNRMC, said: "As a grant-making charity it is our job to identify where the need is greatest within the Naval Service community and support as many of our beneficiaries as we can through the grants we make; in this case to the frontline charities making a difference to people's lives."

"The ability to distribute £2,430,280 to the veterans' community and families is central to our vision of a world in which our sailors, marines and their families are valued and supported for life."

The funds will benefit a number of charities who are well known on both a regional and national level,



● Combat Stress has also received RNRMC funding

such as the Plymouth Drake Foundation, which is a community charity supporting Naval Service families in the Naval city through leisure and arts projects, Combat Stress, which helps ex-Service personnel suffering from psychological injuries and mental health problems, and the Sailors Children's Society, which is aiming to support over 300 disadvantaged Service children in the UK with its grant of £120,000.

Other beneficiaries in the latest round of funding include those who have long-standing relationships with the charity as a major source of their funds. The

Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT), which provides support to Royal Naval ratings and Royal Marines other ranks and their families, and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund (RNRMCF), which is the only charity dedicated to supporting children whose parents work, or have worked, for the Naval Service.

The grants will also help a number of charities that have successfully been awarded funding for the first time, including the SSAFA Norton House at Headley Court in Surrey, which provides a place to stay for families who have a loved one undergoing treatment or rehabilitation at Headley Court and SSAFA St Vincent's, which is a residential care home for Forces veterans on the Isle of Wight.

The list of newly-awarded applicants also includes Broughton House, which is the sole independent provider of nursing and residential care for veterans of the Armed Forces and Merchant Navy in the North-West; Royal British Legion Industries, which helps ex-Armed Forces personnel gain independence through employment; and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Widows Association, which provides support, guidance and comfort to those who have experienced the trauma of bereavement.

Anne Carr, Head of Grants at the RNRMC, said: "The range of organisations and projects we have identified is wide. Each year we endeavour to increase our levels of support – thanks to the funding provided by Greenwich Hospital – to Naval and military charities and therefore welcome applicants for our 2016 programme, which will open in September 2015."

New teams will add to field gun fun

HMS Collingwood at Fareham, Hampshire, will once again open its gates to the public for the annual open day and Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity Field Gun Competition on Saturday June 6.

The long-standing competition features crews from across the UK and as far afield as Gibraltar and Italy, all of whom will be furiously fighting for a chance to win the coveted Brickwoods Trophy.

While expectations to perform will be running high between the competing teams, more than half of those that haven't been able to find sponsorship have been given a major funding boost in the form of a split £30,000 grant towards their training, entry and operational costs.

"With new entries from the Royal Marines, together with the continued entries from overseas teams such as Gibraltar and Naples, such financial

support has become more important than ever," said RNRMC Field Gun project lead Lt Lucy O'Connor.

Field Gun enjoys a proud heritage dating back to 1899 at Ladysmith and epitomises the Naval Service core values and standards: courage, commitment, discipline, respect for others, integrity and loyalty. The addition of a new Queen Elizabeth aircraft carrier team and all-Royal Marines team will make this year's

event a must-see. Other attractions include displays from the Royal Navy Raiders Parachute Display Team, the Tigers Motorcycle Display Team and a bridge simulator that allows youngsters to 'drive' a ship into harbour.

Family tickets for the spectacle start from £20 in advance and are available online, from local establishments and The News offices. For details visit royalnavy.mod.uk/Collingwood-Openday

FUNDRAISERS OF THE MONTH

815 Naval Air Squadron



IN what they must have initially thought their worst week of work ever, an unassuming troupe of aircrew from RNAS Yeovilton was picked at random and dropped in Newcastle by a Royal Navy Lynx helicopter to begin a Return to Base challenge.

With help from a variety of businesses, including Virgin Trains East Coast – and a hearty dose of initiative – Lt Danielle Welch, PO Stuart McAllister, LAET Billy Evans and AET Kelly Turner made their way back home via York, London and Bristol within the space of a week, raising thousands in the process. Brilliant work team!

Don't miss out on medal News in brief

A NEW official commemorative medal is being issued in support of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

The medal, pictured right, is being sold to raise both funds and awareness of the charity and is being limited to just 999 worldwide.

Designed by World Challenge Coins in conjunction with the charity, it features a colour enamel logo finished by hand on one side, with a synopsis of the Royal Navy engraved on the other.

Struck to a proof finish and plated in sterling silver, the medal comes with a certificate of authenticity guaranteeing your number in the edition limit. It is completed with a hand-crafted wooden presentation case featuring the three colours of the White Ensign.

Speaking of the partnership, Lauren Wileman,



Head of Fundraising said: "Challenge coins carry such a rich military history and are still a very popular trading item with today's Serving personnel, so the partnership seemed like a natural fit for the charity."

"It's particularly exciting to think that our coins are likely to travel the world with the Naval Service, spreading the work of the charity in the process."

The medal will initially be on sale to military personnel for £39.99, with a limited amount available to civilians.

If you would like to have the opportunity to own one of the 999 available and directly help support the work of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity visit worldchallengecoins.co.uk/RNRMC

■ ARMED Forces Day takes place on Saturday June 27 and you can meet charity staff at the focal point of the celebrations in host city Guildford. Thousands of well-wishers will be entertained by an air display, a formal parade in Guildford High Street, and a spectacular military show at Stoke Park followed by 'picnic and proms in the park'.

■ WOULD you like to win an Aston Martin? Or how about £75,000? You could, simply by purchasing a £10 raffle ticket in the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Funds' major prize draw. Find out more: rmctf.org.uk

■ FANCY a flutter? Friday June 19 will see the Tri-Service charities – the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, RAF Benevolent Fund and ABF The Soldiers' Charity – collect at Royal Ascot. Come along and support the charity that supports you. Tickets available from ascot.co.uk



● AET Sam Faulkner

Marathon challenge

YOUNG Naval air engineer Sam Faulkner, from RNAS Culdrose was among thousands of runners due to take part in the London Marathon as *Navy News* went to press.

Sam, 25, who maintains Merlin Mk 2 helicopters on 824 NAS, was raising funds for Heidi's Quest, the squadron's special charity.

"I'm cracking some decent 13-15 mile runs almost every day. Cornwall is pretty good for training with plenty of hills to sprint up and down – it's going to set me up for the flatness of London," said Sam.

Heidi's Quest is committed to raising funds that grant wishes to children with debilitating or life-threatening medical conditions.

Sam added: "The charity has helped me personally when my nephew was poorly. They treated him to a very special day out at a local theme park and it's one of the main reasons I'm running for them."

Heroes rally

TWO sailors from HMS Collingwood will follow the path of soldiers from 70 years ago as they take on the Help for Heroes (H4H) 4X4 European Rally.

The Rally entitled Final Mission is themed in commemoration of the D-Day landings.

Forty five teams will compete against one another in a series of challenges over a course of 2,000 miles, through seven European countries in just 12 days.

POs Mike Sawdon and Ashton Peace and Mike's fiancée Lucy Weigel will form the Senior Service team and set off in their Land Rover 'Tonka' on June 13.

Rum goings-on at mess comedy night

THERE was plenty of laughter at the HMS Excellent Senior Rates Mess during an evening of top comedy.

But there was some serious money raised for a local Portsmouth charity as well.

The evening saw three very contrasting acts engage with a lively audience on Whale Island.

They had already been warmed up by Mess President (and Base Warrant Officer) WO Si Hayman, who set the tone early by taking the rise out of particular elements of the Senior Service ("Engineers – Babycham is at the far end of the bar...")

First on was traditional stand-up comic Craig Murray, whose mix of general observations and personal ribbing delighted those gathered.

He was followed by the self-deprecating, gentler and reflective humour of Hull's Nicola Wilkinson.

The final act had plenty scratching their heads as they set up their props – but when Raymond and Mr Timpkins finally let rip with their breathtaking rapid-fire and intricately-planned musical set, the pair had the audience in stitches with their mix of misheard lyrics and cheesy interpretations of songs.

The evening was sponsored by Pusser's Rum – by no means the first time they have lent a hand to the RN and associated charities.

Pusser's has supported the RNA and now the RNRMC (by way of an annual cheque) almost continuously since around 1980.

The Excellent mess's Pickle Night and an earlier comedy night also benefited.

"They have supported our mess very well," said WO Hayman, "and it has made a big difference to us."

Last year Pusser's launched a 40 per cent abv version of the popular 54.5 per cent abv (Gunpowder Proof) rum, as well

Pictures: PO(Phot) Carl Osmond



● Raymond and Mr Timpkins asserting I Can See Clearly Now Lorraine Has Gone...

as a lower abv Pusser's Spiced.

The aim, according to brand manager Peter Thornton, is now to re-introduce Pusser's to its traditional audience, through mess bars and the like, and the more versatile lower abv version should prove more profitable for mess managers and buyers, though the rum is exactly the same as the Gunpowder version.

Pusser's was asked if they would like to sponsor the show as a way of cementing the relationship, and the evening included tastings and a welcome tot for all who wanted one, while a team from Pusser's attended to answer questions – and enjoy the show.

A bucket collection on the night raised more than £860 for the Portsmouth Down Syndrome Association – the event took place during Down Syndrome Awareness Week.



● Nicola Wilkinson contemplates life, love and Hull

Spinning for 24 hours

NAVAL personnel serving alongside 902 Expeditionary Air Wing braved the heat and a lack of sleep during a 24-hour charity spinathon to raise money for the Norfolk Hospice.

The team took time out from reassuring its Middle East partners by protecting the sea lanes of trade throughout the region to take on the epic challenge.

The event started in the early evening with the core team cycling a minimum of 12 hours each. One particularly brave engineer of 814 NAS, PO Steve De'ath, cycled for the full 24 hours.

He said: "Luckily, as far as medical care went I only needed some Sudocrem, but I struggled at the end to keep the pedals turning with my legs full of cramp – but we made it thanks to some fantastic support, and I was delighted to have contributed over £500 for a great cause."

Organiser SAC Gary Farnham said: "As well as all the good things that I have managed to achieve with the event, I was truly humbled by the efforts and support from the whole unit."



● PO Steve De'ath took part for 24 hours

Site chosen for horse memorial

A BID to create a tribute to the horse at the National Memorial Arboretum, in Staffordshire, came a step closer to reality when Olympic dressage rider Richard Davison marked the spot where an impressive statue will be sited.

Richard was joined by 90-year-old horse lover Lydia Smith, from Shrewsbury. She is one of the many driving forces behind a £90,000 fundraising campaign to commemorate horses' service to humans in conflict.

Gypsy, the Shetland pony, who is a mascot for the campaign – known as the Free Spirit Horse Memorial Appeal – was also at the Arboretum, to watch Richard mark the plot with a stake.

The memorial will commemorate the horse's service to humans in conflict, but will also give visitors a chance to reflect on the horse's wider contribution to the workplace, sport, rehabilitation and education.

For details visit www.freespiritmemorial.co.uk

Charity Snippets

■ PERSONNEL from HMS Triumph took part in a triathlon to raise funds for charity.

The event began with a 1.6km swim across the Gare Loch on the Clyde, followed by a 230-mile bike ride to Blackpool, ending with a half-marathon in the town.

Money raised will be shared between Trinity Palliative Care Services and Brian House Children's Hospice in the boat's affiliated town of Blackpool.

To donate visit www.justgiving.com/HmsTriumph

■ RNBT grants administrator Tony Brown has retired after 17 years' service at the charity.

Tony was recently awarded a Second Sea Lord's Commendation for his outstanding work at the Trust.

As he sailed off into the sunset on his narrowboat Charis, all at the charity wished him well in his retirement – and welcomed Sam Allardyce to the team.

■ A GALA dinner and raffle organised by engineer officers at Clyde Naval Base raised more than £2,500 for the Lomond Mountain Rescue Team (LMRT).

The Faslane branch of the Royal Navy Engineers' Quart Club, which holds an annual dinner in aid of local charities, decided to assist the rescue team in purchasing much-needed new equipment in time for the busy summer walking season.

■ SONIA Baker, 85, from Great Abington, who lives with severely restricted mobility, has regained independence thanks to a life-changing, state-of-the-art Balder powered wheelchair donated by several local and military charities.

She now owns an F290 Balder electric wheelchair, manufactured in Scandinavia by Etac, thanks to donations from several charities, including SSAFA, the Royal Marines Association, Royal Naval Benevolent Trust, and the Royal British Legion.

■ RECOVERING military personnel are due to take part in a special international triathlon staged by the Royal Marines.

The Rehabilitation Triathlon is staged at the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone near Exmouth on June 10.

Troops from the US and the Netherlands will join serving RN members and veterans.

Firm backing for C Group

SOME of the West Country's most prominent business leaders gather to support the C Group charity.

The dinner was put on to connect the charity's expanding network with the Royal Marines.

Trustee Tony Rowe advised the guests of the launch of the West Country 100 Club, an exclusive club of 100 West Country businesses who are committed to raise £1,000 per year to support

Royal Marines in need. Twenty-five companies signed up on the night to become founder members.

Guests were treated to entertainment from the Royal Marines Band, a live auction hosted by Graham Barton and a speech from Kriss Akabusi.

The C Group is a self-funded charity, which aims to support Royal Marines in need.

For details contact Caroline Casey on 01392 414 042 or via email at caroline@thecgroup.org

Supporting Children

of Royal Navy and Royal Marines (serving and ex-serving) who are IN NEED, HARDSHIP or DISTRESS



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I was in Indefatigable Wreath was recovered

WE are always pleased to see a reference to HMS Indefatigable, but in your March edition letter writer Brian Allchorn is wrong with his caption.

Indefatigable was still in John Brown's yard in 1942, launched on 8/12/1942, commissioned on 8/12/1943 and the first flying trials were carried out in March 1944.

This photograph is undoubtedly of the flight-deck of Indefatigable since I took it myself on my first roll of Kodachrome film in November 1945.

It has appeared in a number of publications, always unacknowledged, copied from a print I sent to the FAA Museum at Yeovilton.

The carrier shown in the March edition could be Eagle or Indomitable; both ships operated Hurricanes around the time of the Harpoon and Pedestal convoys in mid-1942.

Philip Rowell,
ex Lt (A) RNVR
Powys



● Aircraft pack the flight deck of HMS Indefatigable

IN the January edition of *Navy News* you showed photographs of a wreath tossed overboard a ship.

Does the RN realise that to do this is illegal because of the plastic backing and it is not biodegradable?

A little while ago you published an article and pictures of myself with the captain, crew and passengers on the cruise liner Boudicca of the Fred Olsen line.

We were not allowed to use the Royal British Legion wreath and the captain provided me with a wreath of natural flowers.

Douglas Banks
Chairman HMS Indomitable
Association

A Ministry of Defence spokesman replies:

The Royal Navy places great importance on honouring the memory of those who gave their lives in service of their country. Where individuals have perished at sea, laying a wreath in the water provides a very powerful and poignant way to remember their sacrifice. It is common



● The wreath was recovered from the sea after the ceremony

practice on those occasions for the wreath to be recovered from the water on conclusion of the ceremony, provided it is safe to do so, and I can confirm this was the case for HMS Bulwark's ceremony.

The Royal Navy's guidance to Commanding Officers on

ceremonial wreaths is currently under review and consideration is being given to including more detail on the matter of the laying of wreaths at sea: namely, that the wreaths should be of a biodegradable nature or recovered from the sea on completion of the ceremony.

Haul of screws was heaven for DIY fan

I HAD forgotten all about wooden submarine mock-ups until I read John Clark's letter in March's edition of *Navy News*, then memories flooded back.

I was drafted to the HMS Revenge (starboard crew) building at Cammell Laird's yard in Birkenhead and they, like Vickers in Barrow, had built a wooden mock-up of the two boats on order.

Studying two-dimensional drawings on a blackboard was ok, but the mock-up became invaluable as a three-dimensional teaching aid.

One of my first visits entailed crawling through the ER bilges under the gearbox, tracing lub oil lines, equipped with my notebook and torch.

The investigation came to a painful halt when something sharp jagged into my rear quarters. This was identified as a two-inch carbon steel screw.

Shining my torch into the darkness revealed scores of similar fasteners so I collected a handful or so.

Locating the foreman joiner, I showed him my collection.

He explained his crew of chippies were far too busy to retrieve screws when they were dropped into

the lower levels and anyway the stores department would be far from pleased to receive handfuls of mixed screws as they were too busy to bother sorting them, they would just bin them.

If they are any good to you, he said, keep them.

To a DIY enthusiast this was nirvana and henceforth every trip to the mock up not only increased my knowledge of locations and runs of systems I would be responsible for, but also a selection of steel/brass, pinhead and countersunk, slotted and Phillips-headed screws of every length and diameter conceivable.

It was not until I retired from the RN in 1975 that I was able to make use of my accumulated fasteners, which weighed in excess of 5kg.

Since then they have played a major part in the construction of shelves, window seats, wardrobes, boundary fences and a handmade garden shed – still sound after 15 years with not a nail in sight.

Many thanks to the Lairds wooden mock-up of a Resolution-class Polaris submarine.

MR Golding
Dumbarton



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is MR Golding

I mastered third method of dishing out tot

IT is a matter of regret that I have not been able to contact you sooner, following the publication of the letter entitled Locker Shocker in December 2013's edition of *Navy News*.

By way of explanation, my older brother who lives in Hampshire buys the newspaper and reads it, and only passes them on to me when we meet – which is not all that often.

With the greatest respect to "Jack Dusty 1951-79" I think his memory must be letting him down slightly.

In my Navy, the daily issue of rum was 1/2

gill and not a gill as quoted. There always was and is, 4 gills to a pint, and eight tots in each one.

I had to master a third alternative method of calculation. When calling out the quantities of grog to be issued to the bosun of each mess, it was done in such a way that the two "tankies", seaman-butchers, knew exactly what they had to do. One of them would be wielding the larger one and two-pint measures, whilst the other one was in charge of the four, three, two and one tot ones.

If a mess was to receive, say, six tots, I

would call out "two, two," that is, two pints, two tots, whereas in the case of seven tots the call would be "three out of three."

The tanky with the large measures would pour in the correct number of pints, then the other one with the small ones would either put in the required additional few drops or make a half-hearted attempt to bail out the three tots too much in the case of "three out of three."

Keep up your good work.

Doug Andrews
Hertfordshire

Are there any skilled engravers?

DOES the skill of engraving the inside of a ship's bell still exist?

Surely there are some of these skilled artisans with access to the necessary tools and equipment about.

I am well aware of the current practice of inscribing (as opposed to engraving) the name on brass plaques in the church and yes, they do provide an acknowledgement to a significant occasion in a child's life.

However, compared to an engraving on

the inside of a ship's bell, it does struggle to achieve the same degree of standing and the link between the family, ship and bell is broken. Also with continual cleaning, inscriptions fade whereas an engraving is lasting; it's difficult to believe that these plaques will be there to be admired in 60 or 70 years' time.

Following their baptism in the ship's bell from HMS Truant at St George's with St Gabriel's Church, HMS Collingwood, I have

been trying for a long time to have the names of my grandchildren engraved on the inside of the bell; my daughter was baptised in this bell in 1979.

This bell was, for many years, in St Gabriel's Church, HMS Mercury before being transferred to HMS Collingwood in 1993 when Mercury closed. It is now in the Officers Mess at Corsham.

Ian Stirton Smith
Gosport



LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and full address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it. Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News, nor can we reply to every one.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues. The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



● The RM Guard and B Band of HMS Hood

Crew made up the numbers on Hood

FOLLOWING the publication of a photograph of HMS Royal Oak in your February edition, I wondered how many in the Navy today realise how big these ships were.

The photo shows the Royal Marines Guard and B Band of HMS Hood. The bandmaster was my uncle.

For the world tour of 1928 the musicians were augmented by seven and the buglers by four.

A similar addition was made for HMS Repulse. Thus a combined band produced about 70 people and was used on all large parades.

As an aside, in my day female sailors were known as either Wrens or Mares who wore our cap badge.

WA George
Midhurst



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HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY

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Editor: Mike Gray 023 9262 5257 or Mil: 93832 5257

Editorial

News editor:

Richard Hargreaves

023 9262 5255

Production Editor:

Lorraine Proudlock

023 9262 5282

edit@navynews.co.uk

General enquiries and archives:

023 9262 3553/5847

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD

Business

Business manager:

Lisa Taw: 023 9254 7380

Subscriptions: 023 9254 7114

subscriptions@navynews.co.uk

Accounts: 023 9254 7405

Advertising: 023 9254 7111

advertising@navynews.co.uk

Fax: 023 9254 7117

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NARU minded

TWO military reservists have completed personal protection training for the third wave of military personnel heading out to West Africa to support the international mission to defeat the spread of the Ebola virus.

Officer Cadet Michelle Ping from the Royal Naval Reserve and Staff Sergeant Derrick Sims from the Army Reserve are both paramedics in their civilian jobs working for the National Ambulance Resilience Unit.

Working closely with NHS Public Health England, and NARU, the Army Medical Services Training Centre (AMSTC), has developed rigorous 'best practice' prevention and personal protection procedures. They have

now been delivering a detailed nine-day programme of training in donning and removing personal protective clothing.

For OC Ping this is the third time she has travelled to Yorkshire to conduct training from the National Ambulance Resilience Unit Education Centre near Salisbury in Wiltshire.

Michelle said: "Having deployed myself I've got that military experience of what it's like going into a theatre of operations and as a specialist instructor in protective measures this has been an important and relevant role for NARU. We've worked closely with Public Health England and the AMSTC team to generate these safety procedures."



● OC Michelle Ping during the training programme in Yorkshire

Pilot marks 5,000 hours in the air

A ROYAL Navy pilot from RNAS Culdrose has reached an important and rare flying milestone in his Service career.

Lt Cdr Stu Bainbridge has clocked up an impressive 5,000 flying hours at the controls of military helicopters on operations and as an instructor.

In real terms this equates to almost 210 days permanently airborne. It's all the more impressive to have achieved this in just 18 years of flying.

Stu joined the Royal Navy in 1990, graduating with his flying "Wings" on the Sea King Mk 5 helicopter in 1996.

Since then he has served at RNAS Prestwick in Scotland and RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall.

He is also a Qualified Helicopter Instructor (QHI) and has taught at the Defence Helicopter Flying School (DHFS) at RAF Shawbury in Shropshire.

During his career he has flown three versions of the Sea King Mk 4, 5 and 6, both Merlin Mk 1 and 2, the Squirrel and Lynx.

Stu was also a member of the "Trappers" team who are part of Naval Flying Standards Flight, responsible for ensuring that Royal Navy pilots, observers and aircrewmembers can still make the grade.

He has operated this selection of aircraft from a long list of warships and auxiliaries including: RFAs Olwen, Olna, Argus, Fort Victoria, Fort George and HMS Illustrious, Ark Royal,



● Lt Cdr Stu Bainbridge receiving his Champagne from 824 CO Cdr Steve Thomas

Invincible and Northumberland as Flight Commander.

Former squadrons include: 819 in Scotland, 820, 824 and 829 at Culdrose, 660 at Shawbury and latterly as an agent of the Central Flying School (helicopters) at Naval Flying Standards Flight.

It was at NFSF that Stu put to good use his A2 QHI qualification, providing assurance, maintaining flying standards and safety across

all rotary aircraft in the Fleet Air Arm.

Stu was greeted from his 5,000 hours flight by his Commanding Officer, Cdr Steve Thomas, bearing a bottle of Cornwall's finest champagne followed by a slap-up feed on traditional Fleet Air Arm buns to assist in his ongoing fight against burgeoning cholesterol levels.

"Being recognised for achieving this milestone is a really

great and humbling experience for me," said Stu.

"It seems only yesterday I was starting my flying career with the Royal Navy. I've come a long way in the past 24 years and I have some fantastic memories."

Although Stu has now retired from regular service in the Royal Navy, he continues to provide service as a Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch pilot and flying instructor for 824 NAS.

Chaplain leads class

A NEW Royal Naval Reserve Chaplain was among the team of 19 Officer Cadets to successfully complete the latest RNR confirmation course at Britannia Royal Naval College.

The Reverend Jamie Milliken of HMS Dalriada, in Glasgow, is believed to be the first RNR Chaplain to come through officer training for several years.

Jamie is a minister with the Church of Scotland with a parish in Troon and has been a Reservist Chaplain for almost one year.

He said: "I joined the RNR because I wanted to make my ministry count for more and I wanted to become more; the Royal Navy is the place that makes these possible."

At 45 years old he was one of the oldest on the course but age

and role made no difference, and other than weapons training, he participated fully in every area.

Others, on what was the largest class since the introduction of a new programme in 2012, focussing on the nine core maritime skills, included Surg Lt Shiela Lumley, a doctor based at HMS President in London, a former Royal Marine and two ex-Army officers.

The guests included a considerable contingent from the RNR Air Branch, there to support Mid Michelle Ping.

Michelle joined the Royal Navy in 1992 as an Air Engineering Mechanic (AEM) and completed six years regular service before joining the RNR Air Branch, see left.



● Lt Cdr Hannah MacKenzie with Sir David Brewer

Top award for Wildfire officer

A RESERVIST from HMS Wildfire has been named the Greater London Volunteer Reservist of the Year.

Lt Cdr Hannah MacKenzie was among 43 to receive reserve and cadet awards from the Lord Lieutenant of Greater London Sir David Brewer.

Congratulating all the award winners, he said: "It has been an honour and privilege to present so many awards to London's very special sons and daughters who serve us."

The awards ceremony culminated in the presentation of the prestigious Greater London Volunteer Reservist of the Year 2014 Award.

S/Lt Gaynor Pearce of Chiswick Unit SCC won the Most Outstanding Sea Cadet Corps Unit Commander award.

Other winners are: Runner up Volunteer Reservist of the Year 2014: Lt Alec Harper HMS President. The Lord-Lieutenant's

Meritorious Service Certificate 2014: WO1 James Bryan, London Area SCC, CPO Ian Chown, HMS President, S/Sgt Instructor Andrew Cowland, 146 Cadet Detachment ACF, S/Sgt Julia Davenport, University of London Officer Training Corps, CPO Linda Hadocks, HMS President, S/Maj Instructor Peter Harrison, 7 Company, HQ South East London ACF, CPO Samantha James, London Area SCC, WO2 Kelvin Sauvary, University of London Officer Training Corps, Sgt Neil Watkins, 135 Geographic Squadron RE, S/Sgt Rachel Williams, 3 Military Intelligence Battalion, Cpl Neil Williamson, 253 Provost Company RMP, Sgt Andrew Wise, 253 Provost Company RMP.

Award to the Most Outstanding Combined Cadet Force Contingent Commander: Major Christopher Burton, Wilson's School CCF

Inspiring leader bows out

A PRESENTATION took place at HMS Vivid to mark the end of a four-year tenure of Lt Cdr Michael White RNR as SO2 AWNIS (Allied Worldwide Navigation Information System) within the RNR MTO Specialisation.

Lt Cdr White, who in his day job works within the Defence Maritime Geospatial Intelligence Centre at the UK Hydrographic Office, is a reservist at HMS Vivid in Plymouth.

During his tenure he oversaw AWNIS mobilisations for numerous operational requirements, including Kipion, West Africa, Ellamy and the Olympics (the latter two he participated in) as well as exercises in North and South America, Europe, Asia and New



● Lt Cdr White receives his gifts from Capt Stocker

Zealand.

The presentation of a Dartington Crystal decanter and some Islay single malt whisky to go in it, resulted from a

collection made from all AWNIS officers and senior rates, with the inscription reading: "With thanks for your inspiration and leadership, from your AWNIS practitioners."

It was presented by Captain South, Capt Jeremy Stocker during a visit to HMS Vivid.

An MTO Officer, Lt Richard Burdett, from HMS Flying Fox and currently mobilised on Op Kipion, said he was a superb instructor, and where ever you go with MTO, in the US, New Zealand or Australia and across the globe, you'll meet people who know Michael - his name is synonymous with AWNIS and excellence within his profession.

He made a strong, positive impression within his specialisation, and with professionals around the world.

PASS IT ON! WE NEED YOUR EXPERIENCE IN RECRUITING

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● Duncan's sailors tackle the 'Row the Suez Challenge' – 110 men and women rowing the 162km length of the Middle East waterway
Picture: LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson, HMS Duncan

Duncan ditches the donuts

SHE'S the newest, most potent surface ship in the RN arsenal.

Come December, when HMS Duncan returns to Portsmouth from her maiden deployment, she could also be the leanest, fittest, healthiest.

The destroyer is leading a specially-devised healthy lifestyle trial throughout her tour of duty in the Gulf.

If the efforts of the scientists and medical experts at the Institute of Naval Medicine, Duncan's sick bay team, chefs, physical training instructor, and the co-operation of the 240 sailors and Royal Marines aboard pay off, the ship's company should return home thinner and in much better shape than other RN warships on lengthy deployments.

The initiative has been driven by the rise in obesity levels across society – the result, largely, of poor diet and lack of exercise.

So before the sixth and final Type 45 destroyer left Portsmouth at the beginning of March, around three quarters of the ship's company had various measurements taken. They'll be recorded again at the half-way point and finally when Duncan comes home.

In addition, sailors are keeping 'food diaries' of their daily intake, of the 30 or so smokers aboard, six have committed to a quit programme, attendance at physical training sessions is being recorded, adventurous training activities and, for slightly less adventurous, countryside walks organised when the destroyer puts into port.

"We pit departments against each other, which helps to maintain interest and gets a bit of competition going," says Duncan's medical officer Surg Lt Laura Morrow – chief among them, Duncan's Biggest Loser (of weight/waistline, that is).

It's the daily diet, however, that is the big talking point. The best way to eat healthily is, says MA Tom Laws, to "eat like a king at breakfast, like a prince at lunchtime, and a pauper at tea time."

Which isn't necessarily possible all the time. But with some thought, patience (preparing healthier meals takes the chefs longer) and money (acquiring fresher, healthier ingredients does cost more than the usual £2.80 daily allowance for three square meals per sailor), a new menu is available.

So there's chilli con quornie ("actually better than the beef," says Tom), curry nights with less oil used, fish on Fridays – but with the option of it poached, rather than battered, and accompanied by wedges, not chips. Any leftover fish goes into a seafood jambalaya, instead of a fish pie. And on Saturdays, there is still steak. But with salad (although you can have chips if you want them).

Breakfast is much more continental – fruit, yoghurt, cereals – with a full English only available on three days a week (which has provoked grumbling from some shipmates).

Others, however, have filled in positive feedback forms: "The food is 100 per cent better than it was – and I'm someone who loves well-cooked food"; "better healthier choices"; and "I think that everyone needs to be healthier in their food choices, so this is good."

Warfare welfare and career management

Explaining Manpower (Career Management speak decoded)

THE size of each branch is governed by its liability (the number of funded billets, with a small allowance for training courses and medical margin). The strength is the actual number of personnel.

These two factors determine the numbers for promotions and ES/EC/EoS. However, 'useable strength' is less than actual strength as it takes account of more personnel being in the margin than catered for (eg medical downgrades, additional training) and the number of personnel in non-liable billets; these are the main causes of gapping.

The availability of Suitably Qualified and Experienced Personnel (SQEP), minimum time ashore (MTA), and Voluntary Outflow further limit options and can in turn lead to churn. Policies to reduce churn are being put in place, but will take time to have effect.

Warfare manpower – current issues

Resettlement: Personnel completing their engagement should be assigned to shore service for at least their last four months to one year, depending on their length of engagement.

Units cannot avoid having personnel assigned who are in their resettlement phase; career managers are only obliged to assign reliefs from the start of Terminal Leave. Annual Leave Allowance and Graduated Resettlement Time are the responsibility of the employer and the individual to manage.

Early Termination: The standard Voluntary Outflow period is 12 months.

Reliefs will be assigned to meet the start of terminal leave, based on this 12-month period; if a person wishes to leave early, the employing organisation must be prepared to take a soft gap and make a statement to that effect, in writing, to the career manager.

Voluntary Outflow: Please call and inform your career manager before submitting your voluntary outflow. Often, one or more factors in your decision is perception rather than reality – we may be able to sort this out.

It also allows greater time to find a relief for you and to plan your resettlement.

NMT Qualifications: There are still some individuals with legacy SPF qualifications; the window for conversion of these has now

Title	Person	Career Manager for		
WAR OR SO1	Cdr David Wilkinson	Head of Warfare Ratings Manager	8868	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR SO1
RCM SO2 AW	Lt Cdr Rob Brann	WO1s Warfare (inc FAA/SM)	8875	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR AWSO2
RCM SO2 UW	Lt Cdr Karl Wall	TL for UW SSM, TSM, COXN(SM), Divers, WS(UW), MW	8892	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR UWSO2
RCM AIR WO1	WO1 Marty Pilbeam	TL AIR AH, AC, ACMN, RNP, PTI	8874	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR AIRWO1
WAR SURF WO1	WO1 Mark Padgett	TL SURF AWW, AWT, SEA, PHOT, IA	8846	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR SURFWO1
WAR INT1	WO1 Nathan Lawton	WO1 CT, WS(EW)	8924	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR INT1
WAR INT2	CPO Will Burton	TL CT/EW		
WAR OR CM7	CPO Susan Jefferies	WO2-AB CT	8852	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR INT2
WAR OR CM1	CPO Pop Larkin	CPO/PO EW		
WAR OR CM3	PO Si Cooke	CPO-PO AWW/AWT	8873	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR AWWAWT
WAR OR CM5	PO Nick Nicholson	CPO-AB AC	8878	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR AIR
WAR OR CM6	PO Phil Yates	CPO-LH RNP		
WAR OR CM4	PO Dave Bolton	CPO-PO MW	8879	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR DMW
WAR OR CM ADMIN	Lorraine Conway	CPO-AB Diver		
		CPO-PO SM, TSM, SSM, COXN(SM), UW	8941	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR SMUW
		CPO-NA NA(AH)	8841	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR JRAH
		CPO-LH PTI		
		CPO-PO Sea	8882	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR SEAPHOT
		CPO-PO Phot/IA	8893	NAVY PERS-CM OR WAR ADMIN2
		WAR OR ADMIN		

All phone numbers start 02392 62 or Mil: 93832

Drafty's corner



closed, so be prepared to attend an NMT course as part of your PJT package.

Any questions regarding the pre-requisites for attending NMT courses should be directed to your local SPF Manager.

Future Availability Dates (FADs): In accordance with BRd3, FADs are for guidance only and reflect the current state of manning levels. FADs can be amended by career managers to reflect the needs of the Service.

This does not generate an Assignment Order but will reflect on Separated Service Planning Tool (SSPT) within each unit.

Physical Training: PT branch is still actively recruiting. Next LPT course is loaded with 18 students.

Submariners (all specs): Senior rate manning is in a delicate state, and individuals may have their FADs extended whilst large PJT packages are completed.

Recruitment to COXN(SM) from all submarine branches remains a priority.

Communication Technician/ Electronic Warfare/Image Analyst: The CT branch remains broadly in balance with recruitment increasing to meet future demands.

EW is broadly in balance although LS numbers are in a slightly fragile state.

The IA sub-specialisation has now been removed from the photography branch with liability in the process of being shared between EW and HM.

It will take time to grow SQEP from these branches so selected photographic personnel are still being employed within IA to maintain operational capability.

You can help yourself to help us

JPA: Make sure that JPA accurately reflects your preferences. Career managers make decisions balancing the needs of the Service against the professional and personal aspirations/preferences of the individual as recorded in JPA.

Your area preferences should reflect a realistic choice of employment options that exist for your rank/main trade.

SJARs:

■ ES3(EC) – In a high proportion of SJARs presented to the ES3 boards so far this year, text in the narrative did not match the recommendation. Reasons why the subject should be retained are valuable.

■ A large number have no career aspirations or have not set any personal objectives.

■ Reports should comment on future potential and capacity for the next higher rate rather than just repeat the performance narrative.

Comments relating to an individual's aspirations are also useful.

■ Discrepancies between a 'yes' for 1 Rank Up but the narrative only indicating 'developing' leave the Board in doubt as to whether the individual is actually being recommended.

Assignment Cycle: Be aware of your likely sea/shore rotation – it should not come as a surprise if your SAV date is due and you get assigned back to sea. If in doubt, check with your CM so you can manage your and your family's expectations accordingly.

How Do I Contact 'Drafty'? Generally, junior ratings (except Divers, PT, RN Police and aircraft controllers) are managed by the relevant Career Management Cells (Devonport, Portsmouth, Faslane, Culdrose or Yeovilton) and senior ratings are managed centrally from West Battery.

Firstly though, please consider whether your query is relevant; is the Divisional chain or Unit HR/UPO more appropriate, or is the answer in BRd3?

NEED to get your message across?

To feature in the Navy News Two-Six pages contact Navy Command Media – Internal Comms Staff Officer: Lt Cdr Emma McCormick, 93832 8809, email NAVY.MEDIACOMMS-IC-TL@mod.uk

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● WO2 Hill with his parents Bryn and Sandra and wife Susan



● WO2 Williams with his mum Colleen and wife Beth



● WO1 Portman with his dad Leslie and wife Susan



● WO1 Donald with his wife Helen

Five of the best Are you set for summer?

NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION



FIVE hugely-experienced Naval Service personnel have been recognised for their outstanding contribution to the Service and nation with prestigious Meritorious Service Medals.

Four of the awards have gone to warrant officers (three RN, one RM), one to a chief petty officer.

■ WO1 Mark Portman, 54, of Plymouth, who has been in the Navy for 34 years, spending a decade in general service and 24 years as a submariner.

■ CPO(Wtr) David Garner, 45, based in Portsmouth, has served for 24 years and works at HMS Excellent as part of the security team.

■ WO1 Carl Donald, 44, of Plymouth, who has served in the Senior Service for 29 years – and is in his final job in the Navy as the Executive Warrant Officer on board Type 23 frigate HMS Portland – the most senior non-commissioned officer.

■ WO2 Engineering Technician (Marine Engineer Submarine) Stephen Hill, 49, of Cardiff, who has served in the Senior Service for 30 years – spending 20 of those on submarines and completing 20 nuclear deterrent patrols.

■ WO2 Ashley Williams, 39 of Rainworth, who has served in the Senior Service for 23 years – and is in his final job as the Warrant Officer Bandmaster and Coordinator to the Principal Director of Music Royal Marines based at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

WO1 Portman said: “Almost without exception, I have been very fortunate to be surrounded by good people and more importantly good teams of people.”

WO1 Donald said: “To be formally recognised for my service and commitment over the last 29 years comes at a time when I am moving onto a new career and chapter in my life and could not have ended my time on a higher note.”

At the time of his nomination WO2 Hill was working as the coordinator for the Marine Engineering department on board HMS Vigilant. He is now the team leader for the vibration analyses unit in Faslane, Scotland.

“I was very surprised and flattered to be nominated and chosen for this award,” said Stephen.

One of the initiatives WO2 Williams created during his time in the job was the creation of an Awards and Prizes package for the Royal Marines Band Service in conjunction with the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity. This has the potential to award up to £15k a year in recognition of musical and command achievement.

“I was certainly surprised to receive the MSM but very honoured indeed, especially to be presented with it by the Second Sea Lord on board HMS Victory,” he said.

CPO Garner was nominated while working at RM Poole as an Information Supervisor – a job at which he excelled, implementing a process that vastly improved the performance of the unit’s server. The senior rating is also a national GEMS award winner and was appointed director of RN Rugby League, winning the Inter-Services competition last year for the first time since 2008.

He dedicated his award to his late father Robert, a former merchant sailor who died in October last year “as he was my inspiration and hero.”

Just 52 Meritorious Service Medals are presented each year. The MSM is the highest distinction for senior ratings outside the realm of bravery. Only RN personnel who have completed 20 years’ service, have already received the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and have a Service record classed as exemplary are eligible.

Nominees must then pass a biannual selection board, which is made up of senior officers, a member of the Naval Command Executive, the Warrant Officer of the Naval Service and the Corps’ Regimental Sergeant Major. Only once the number of candidates has been reduced to the allocated number are they then invited to attend the ceremony and medal presentation.

AS SUMMER approaches and the weather warms up, we have some hot topics we would like to raise with readers.

Insurance for Families

Are you planning to book a summer holiday or mid-deployment break? If so, it’s worth checking what insurance cover you have in place. Whilst changes to holiday plans caused by the needs of the Service can be refunded for Armed Forces personnel, friends and family can be left to fund their last minute changes.

Holiday insurance policies provided by Service Insurance and Investment Advisory Panel (SIAP) members are designed to meet the specific needs of personnel and their families. For more information on holiday insurance, as well as other forms of protection insurance, pension, investment, and mortgage advice, visit: www.siap.org.

Mileage Allowance Relief

HMRC and the MOD have worked together to clarify uncertainty surrounding the tax implications of several allowances: Home to Duty Travel (HDT), Mileage Allowance Relief (MAR), and Motor Mileage Allowance (MMA).

Personnel who receive MMA for approved Business Travel are entitled to claim MAR. The payment of HDT and Get You Home Travel (GYH(T)) allowances will continue to be tax-free.

More details are available on

Contact NFF

■ 023 9265 4374/admin@nff.org.uk/Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

Or visit www.nff.org.uk for news, our free, quarterly *Homeport* magazine and monthly e-update.



our website.

Enhancements to the Overseas Offer

Funding has been approved for a significant package of measures that improve the overseas offer for Service personnel.

The enhanced offer recognises the importance of having the right personnel overseas, and the value of accompanied Service.

These enhancements took effect on April 1:

■ Increased Disturbance Expense (DE) for overseas moves: the new rates will be announced shortly

■ Subsistence for travel on assignment in North West Europe (Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, the Netherlands): This enhances the current provision to permit one overnight stop en route to an assignment

■ DE and Personal Effects Rates for certain single and

married unaccompanied personnel: this allows the claiming of accompanied rates of DE and funding for the transport of Personal Effects for single and married unaccompanied personnel assigned overseas and occupying Service Families Accommodation by virtue of their appointments

■ A doubling of the School Children’s Visit entitlement for personnel assigned overseas, with children up to 18 years old: provision has risen from three return journeys per year, to six

■ Duty Travel for those entering Resettlement Training before discharge/retirement: entitlement will be granted for return flights or other travel to the UK, where the resettlement guidance/training is predominantly based

■ Advance of Pay: Personnel who are permanently assigned overseas and are eligible to receive an advance of pay, in accordance with JSP754, will be entitled to receive an advance of up to four months net pay.

Areas under development include: the extension of the Partner Employment Project Provision, the Representational Support for Defence Attachés, and Overseas Accommodation Charges.

See our website for more information.

Where to look

RNTMs

093/15 ET(WE)1 and ET(ME)1 Streaming Preferences Declaration
094/15 Engineering Technician (Marine Engineer Submarines) Fast Track
096/15 Personal Security Clearances
097/15 Books of Reference made Obsolete
098/15 Amendment to the Policy for Wearing Royal Navy Personal Clothing System (RNPCS)
100/15 Advisory Support to Navy Command GEMS Group Review Meetings
106/15 The New Joiner Medical on RN and RFA Ships
108/15 Logistics Branch Road Show
118/15 Weapon Engineer Submarines – Financial Retention Incentive for Senior Rates

Galaxy briefs

08-2015 Armed Forces’ Pay Award 2015
07-2015 New Employment Model Forces Help to Buy Update
06-2015 Second Sea Lord Supersession
05-2015 RN Strategic Message House
04-2015 Introduction of new RN Personal Clothing System
03-2015 RN Cyber Strategy
02-2015 Defence Gateway

DINS

01-074 Changes to the Armed Forces Pension Scheme 1975 (AFPS 75)
01-075 Process for Purchasing Added Pension contracts (formerly Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs)) under Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2015
01-078 Promotion to LET – Requirement for Special SJAR Reports
01-082 Pension Tax – Lifetime Allowance, Annual Allowance and Pensions Earning Cap
01-083 Pensions Tax – Scheme Pays for In-Year Leavers [Supersedes DIN 2014DIN01-069]
01-059 Procedures for requesting a visit to Queen Elizabeth-Class aircraft carriers at Rosyth [Supersedes DIN 2014DIN04-027]
01-059 Claims and Insurance Provisions for the use of MOD Vehicles in the UK and Overseas and Confirmation of Motor Liability Cover [Supersedes DIN 2014DIN05-011]
01-030 Royal Navy Sailing Association Offshore Inter-Command Regatta 2015 - Notice of Race
01-031 Services Offshore Regatta 2015 - Notice of Race

Faraday

There are several Programme Faraday RNTMs with a specific WE/ME theme:

086/15 Policy for the Introduction of the Revised Engineering General Service (EGS) and Engineering Submarine Service (ESM) Branch Badges
088/15 Integration of the General Service WE and CIS sub-branches – policy for management of the ET(WE) (CIS) stream following Vesting Day
089/15 Integration of the Submarine WESM and CISSM sub-branches – policy for management of the ET(WESM)(CIS) stream following Vesting Day
097/15 Promulgation of revised Course Titles for Engineering Technician Weapon Engineering General & Submarine Service
111/15 Integration of the WE/CIS and WESM/CISSM Sub-Branched – Policy for the Cross Training of Source Branch Senior Ratings
112/15 Revised Availability Date for the Engineering Submarine Service (ESM) Branch Badges

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Ask Jack

HMS Euryalus: Ex CPO Ian Wann is searching for a copy of the commissioning book for HMS Euryalus of 1966-68. Contact Stephanie at steph.taylor.photography@hotmail.co.uk or write to 1 Laws Place, Monifieth, Dundee, Angus DD5 4SF.

HMS Glowworm: April 8 this year was 75 years since HMS Glowworm was despatched by battlescruiser HMS Renown to search for a man overboard. She came across two German destroyers and the Admiral Hipper, and during the engagement she rammed and damaged the cruiser. Glowworm, badly damaged, exploded and sank. Her CO, Lt Cdr Gerard Roope, who drowned, was awarded the Victoria Cross. Few of the crew survived and John Pittcock asks the question – are any survivors still alive today? His grandfather, James Arthur Pittcock, was an Able Seaman on Glowworm at the time and I am trying to find a photograph of him. Contact John Pittcock at johnngp46@yahoo.co.uk or write to 5 Halsteads Way, Steeton, West Yorkshire BD20 6SN.

HMS Good Hope: Henry B Mackay does family history research as a hobby and his uncle Ab Bernard Tighe was on HMS Good Hope, which was lost with all hands at the Battle of Coronel. Henry recently read the article in the December 2000 edition of *Navy News* regarding a letter from a crewman of the Good Hope known only as Frank. The letter was written by Frank off the island of Fernando de Noronha, Brazil, and was discovered by Ex-CRS Joe Lamb of Ramsbottom whilst sorting old mail for recycling at a Manchester paper mill. Henry would like to find more about this letter, and where was Mr Lamb clearing the mail from? Contact Henry at hb.mackay@virginmedia.com or tel 0141 634 3235.

William G Brighton (1941) L/Sig: John Brighton is trying to find out if anyone is still alive who knew his uncle, P/SSX18484 William G Brighton (1941) L/Sig, killed in action in HMS Cossack on October 23 1941. Some six weeks before being killed, while the ship was in Scotland, he married a lady called Janet. We know the ship was around Leith, Rosyth and Scapa Flow 1940-41 but that's all. John would love to know more of Janet, her family, or the wedding and guests. He is hoping you can help build a picture of an uncle he never knew. Contact John at rundo12@gmail.com or write to 98 Haines Way, Watford, Herts WD12 7QL.

Promotions

Selections for promotion to Lt Cdr RN and Major RM; effective October 1 2015

Warfare

Lt W A D Alexander; Lt R J Angliss; Lt O R B Ayers; Lt A S L Barber; Lt E J Barham; Lt K E Barnicoat; Lt A J Beck; Lt T O Becker; A/Lt Cdr J A K Benbow; Lt D H Berry; Lt A W Bird; Lt C J Blackburn; Lt M G Blake; Lt S L Bligh; Lt J E Borrett; Lt D A Briscoe; Lt W L Burgoyne; Lt T E R Cackett; Lt C Campbell; Lt J A Capps; Lt F S D Carman; Lt S F Carnew; Lt S M Cassidy; Lt T Castrinoyannakis; Lt I V Chudley; A/ Lt Cdr P J I Clarkson; A/Lt Cdr R Coatalen-Hodgson; Lt S J Collins; Lt M A T Colvin; Lt S N Cooke; Lt S N J Court; Lt D M Craig; Lt A A Crawford; A/Lt Cdr S Crombie; Lt F S Cumming; Lt M C Curd; Lt J D Cursiter; Lt A C Denyer; Lt C Easterbrook; Lt W J J Edwards-Bannon; Lt M J Ellicott; Lt D N Elliott; Lt P J P Ellison; Lt L J Evans; Lt P A Evans; Lt I R Farr; A/Lt Cdr J S Firih; Lt J P Fitzgibbon; Lt A S Fletcher; Lt G F Flint; Lt H G Floyer; A/Lt Cdr J M Fraser; Lt D Gordon; Lt D A Gorman; Lt J P Graham; Lt T M Greaves; A/Lt Cdr A S Hackland; Lt W Hairsine; Lt J P Harkin; Lt C G W Harris; Lt C L L Holliehead; Lt P J M Holmes; Lt J W Howard; A/Lt Cdr C M Howe; Lt P R Inglesby; A/Lt Cdr D D Ingram; Lt I Jardine; Lt B D Jewson; Lt H E M Johnson; Lt T Johnson; Lt A I Johnston; Lt B J Kerley; A/ Lt Cdr C J Ladislais; Lt T A Leonard; Lt D

Deaths

Vice Admiral Rustom Ghandhi. Joined the RN College at Eaton Hall in 1942. Midshipman in HMS Suffolk 1943-44, then HMS Wakeful during the attacks on Japanese-held refineries in Indonesia 1945; in Tokyo Bay when the Japanese formally surrendered. 1946 he was a Sub Lt in HMS Shamsher then flag lieutenant to Vice Admiral Sir Geoffrey Miles, last CinC of the Royal Indian Navy. 1947-48 he served as *aide-de-camp* to Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last Viceroy. 1963 attended US Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, and was chief naval instructor at Indian Defence Services Staff College at Wellington in Tamil Nadu 1965-68. Posted to Britain as a naval adviser at Indian High Commission 1972, then promoted rear admiral. Returned to India as Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet, later appointed Flag Officer Commanding Western Fleet in Bombay. Promoted vice admiral and Chief of Naval Personnel 1976. His final appointment was as CinC Western Naval Command; he retired in 1979. Later technical adviser during making of film *The Sea Wolves* (1980); chairman of the Shipping Corporation of India and 1986-90 governor of Himachal Pradesh. December 23. Aged 90.

Capt Stephen A N Combe RM. 847 NAS, RAF Shawbury, School of Army Aviation Middle Wallop, Commachio Gp RM, HMS Sultan and CTCRM. February 19. Aged 42.

Cdre Gordon G Greenfield RD RNR. List 1 RNR. March 2. Aged 87.

Surg Capt Herbert R T A McLeod. HMS Nelson, Drake, Neptune, St Angelo, Daedalus, Hampshire and RN WT Station Mauritius. March 27.

Cdr Glen E Crosbie. HMS Victory (RNB), St Angelo, Phoenicia, President, St Vincent, Bellerophon, Murray, Coquette, Pluto, Aisne and Bleasdale. March.

Lt Cdr John D Owen. HMS Chichester, Blackpool, President, Brencley, Chaplet and RAN ships HMAS Watson and Melbourne. March 12.

Lt Ian D Fraser DSC RNRV. HMS Grebe. March 7. Aged 96.

David Grout FCMEA(P). Served 1945-75. HMS Fisgard, Caledonia, Glasgow, Sheffield, Diligence, Protector and Sultan. Seconded to Royal Malaysian Navy 1961-63 then based at Vospers in Portsmouth 1963-65; also HMS Tiger, Bulwark and Osprey. Worked with US Marines at their

base at Hythe as a Marine Engineering Surveyor and completed 19 years with the Civil Service as a civilian instructor at HMS Sultan. Member of the Fisgard and Grenville 45 Associations. April 3. Aged 85.

Stephen ‘Spin’ Dwyer WO2 Weapons Engineer. Served 1984-2009 in HMS Lancaster, Iron Duke, Chatham, Northumberland and Montrose. March 15. Aged 48.

John ‘Mouse’ Slater LS. Served 1949-58 HMS St Vincent, Drake, Cumberland, Cockade and Wizard. HMS Cockade Association and Vice Chairman of the Wizard and Cadiz Association, also editor of their newsletter. March 2. Aged 81.

Thomas ‘Uncle Tom’ W Wilkinson Fleet MAA. Served 1947-79 HMS Ganges, Drake, Jamaica, Excellent, Belfast, Liverpool, Victory, Heron, Eagle, Dartmouth and Ark Royal. Member of Regulating Branch Association and honorary member of Aircraft Handlers Association. April 1. Aged 86.

John ‘George’ Heslop (Reading) MT1(R). Served 1971-90 RNH Haslar, Plymouth and Malta, also HMS Mercury, Drake, Heron, Neptune and Cochrane. RN Medical Branch Ratings & Sick Berth Staff Association. April. Aged 60.

Anthony ‘Tony’ McCabe. Joined 1976 and served in HMS Ark Royal. March 9 in Spain. Aged 55.

Jeffrey ‘Jeff’ Smailes Fleet CPO. March 22. Aged 79.

Udo Juergen ‘James’ Watts C(MEM)L. Served 1961-84 HMS Collingwood, Falmouth, Ark Royal, Penelope, Russell, Argonaut, Birmingham and Glamorgan. April 4. Aged 70.

Alun Walters. March 21. Aged 45.

Royal Naval Association

Lt Cdr Terence C Shad. Joined 1946 as boy seaman, PO at 22 and promoted to Wardroom 1961 aged 30. HMS Impregnable, Drake, Gambia, Vernon, Osprey, Wizard, Wrangler, Flamingo, Highflyer, Implacable, Ocean, Cook and Eagle. Chairman of March branch. April. Aged 83.

Colin Foley SBA. Served 1951-61 at Victoria Barracks PMO, Collingwood, RNH Stonehouse, HMS Alauinia, Nuthatch, Triumph, 42 Cdo, HQ 3 Cdo, HMS Drake, Condor and Victory (RNB). Also 1961-67 as LSBA(X) with the RAN in HMAS Cerberus, Lonsdale, Huron and Yarra. Member of the

RMA and Cardiff RNA. Aged 81.

James ‘Jim’ Smith AB. Served 1940-46 HMS Pembroke, Wildfire, Rooke, Fernmoor and Drake. Rockingham and District (Western Australia) RNA. March 22.

Jim Morrison CPO(E). Served 1950-73 HMS Raleigh/Howe and on the 4th Cruiser Squadron at Trincomalee, then HMS Vernon, Bigbury Bay, Bellerophon, Albion, Murray, Lochinvar, Manxman, SORS, Rosyth, Raleigh, Caprice, Tiger, Russell, Nubian, Duncansby Head, Cleopatra Caledonia. Founder member of the City of Inverness branch. March 8. Aged 81.

Rodney ‘Rod’ ‘Bob’ Arthur Jenkins L/Sea. Served 1948-62 in HMS St Austell Bay (48-51), Burchhead Bay (51-54), Narvik (58-59), and Londonderry (60-62). Past Welfare Officer Peterborough branch. March 13. Aged 85.

Julie Bird (nee Coard) PO Wren Writer (Pay). Served 1967-81 HMS Pembroke, Excellent, Goldcrest, Heron, Seahawk, Daedalus and CTCRM. Committee member Ipswich RNA, the Wrens Association and Staff TS Orwell. February 28. Aged 65.

Peter Tucker DSM. RN 1939-52 then RZNZ for ten years. Awarded the DSM 1944 in HMS Wild Goose which sank six U-boats in ten days as part of Captain Walker’s group; also served in HMS Belfast (Korean War). Chichester branch. February 1. Aged 91.

Alfred ‘Alf’ Steadman. Served HMS Wren, Arctic Convoys. National Standard Bearer for HMS Wren Association. Southend on Sea branch. March 19. Aged 90.

Ken Birkenshaw PO Cox’n. Served 1941-48 in HMS Sheffield (Arctic convoys). Chairman of Barnsley branch. Aged 91.

Terrence ‘Terry’ Norman ST PO (Supply). Served 1946-53 HMS Theseus, Siskin, Armada and Saintes. Eastbourne branch. April 12. Aged 86.

Fleet Air Arm Association

Anthony Morris NA1 (Armourer). Served 1943-46 HMS Gosling, 802 Sqn (RAF Warrington), HMS Premier and Queen, RAF Northweald and Daedalus. Kent branch and Chatham RNA. March 10 at Pembroke House. Aged 90.

Gordon Macrow PO RM(A). Served 1942-46. Eastbourne branch also Bexhill RNA. March. Aged 91.

Derek Stanley Final AM1(O). Served 1945-48. Essex branch. March 17. Aged 86.

George Mead LAM(A). Served 1950-58. Essex branch. 2014. Aged 81.

Association of Royal Navy Officers/ RNOC

Capt Kenneth W Bradley. HMS Osprey, Excellent, Hampshire and DG Ships. March 22. Aged 92.

Lt Rex B Ayres RNRV. RNAS Lossiemouth. March 19. Aged 98.

Lt George M Bicks. HMS Seahawk, Goldcrest and Bulwark. February 15. Aged 81.

Lt R V Coleman RNR. March 16. Aged 84.

Lt John T Dyer. HMS Seahawk, Osprey, Fulmar, Ariel, Victorious, Kestrel, Ford, Eglinton, Centaur and 898 NAS. March 19. Aged 85.

Sub Lt L E Peter George. March 27. Aged 90.

Sub Lt Hugh W Williams. March 15. Aged 96.

Rev John A G Oliver. RN College Greenwich, Manadon, RM Condor, HMS Nelson, Terror, Fisgard, Ausonia, Narvik and Fearless. March 19. Aged 87.

3/O Margaret Bird. March 15. Aged 96.

Reunions

June 2015

HMS Ark Royal Communicators 1973-77: 14th reunion takes place in Plymouth from June 26. For further information please contact Jeremy Smith at jsmith@greenford5.fsnet.co.uk or write to 5 West Ridge Gardens, Greenford, Middlesex, UB6 9PE or telephone 07789 375611.

September 2015

HMS Eagle, Commissions 1952-72: ‘Friends of HMS Eagle’ are holding a 43rd Anniversary ‘Nautical Experience’ weekend reunion at the Queensferry Hotel near Rosyth from September 11-13. All Eagles plus wives/partners and guests are very welcome to celebrate the 43 years since the Mighty E decommissioned in Portsmouth in 1972. Meet and greet Friday evening in the Pentland Suite, followed on Saturday with various tours and visits to local attractions, assisted by Queensferry Sea Cadets, including HMV Britannia and a local distillery. A Very Nautical Gala Dinner, Dance and entertainment in the Caledonian Suite on Saturday evening, including Up Spirits. For details, contact organiser Bill Melvin (Ex-L/PTI) at bill.melvin2@btinternet.com, tel 07741 300750 or 4 Middleton Crescent, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen AB22 8HY, or events sec Danny du Feu, ex-L/Sea(Boats), email ddf.photography@gmail.com, tel 07966 258103.

Plymwick reunion: The second Plymwick Association reunion will take place at the Toorak Hotel in Torquay from September 11-13 and is open to all who served in HM Ships Plymouth and Berwick during the time in command of Cdr Hames. Contact IOW Tours at enquiries@iowtours.com, tel 01983 405116 or contact Steve Latham at larramus@live.com

Royal Navy Boom Defence Ratings: The next Boomers Convention will be held in Scarborough from September 18-19. Contact Alfie Mumberson at barcarolet1956@blueyonder.co.uk, tel 01302 811898, or Lance Hollingsworth at Lthpsh@aol.com, tel 01723 369798.

TS Mercury Old Boys’ Association hold their annual reunion and AGM at the Brookfield Hotel, Ermsworth, on September 26. Booking forms are available on the association website at www.tsmercury.com and further details can be obtained from Mike Ball at mikeball1@virginmedia.com or tel 023 9263 7477.

14th Carrier Air Group Reunion Association: The 21st and final reunion for anyone who served with 804 and 812 NAS, 1946-52, HM Ships Ocean, Glory and Theseus, or with the squadrons at any other time, will be held on September 26 at the RNA Club, Royal Leamington Spa. Wives, partners and family members welcome. Details from Ken Lambert at Lambert5nr@

Sports Lottery

Feb 7: £5,000 – Mne J Davies; £1,800 – Lt K Lockley; £800 – LH C Shaw; £600 – Cpl K Andrews; £500 – Lt J Albon; £400 – LH M Rowe.

Feb 14: £5,000 – WO2 N Adler; £1,800 – Mne J Lainsbury; £800 – AB1 S Foulds; £600 – LH M Butcher; £500 – LH K Burgess; £400 – Cdr C Coles.

Feb 21: £5,000 – LH J Pavey; £1,800 – Lt J Thomas; £800 – CPO A Jeffries; £600 – AB2 S Buck; £500 – Mne G Hicks; £400 – LH J Thirkle.

Feb 28: £5,000 – LH A Kinge; £1,800 – Capt G Hill; £800 – Cdr T Hulme; £600 – Cdr M Wooller; £500 – PO D Wilson; £400 – LH S Holmes.

Submariners Association

Tex Golding CPO Cox’n. Served 1947-69 in submarines Tactician, Aurochs, Auriga, Anchorite, Sleuth, Solent, Scorchor, Artemis, Thermopylae, Tolem and Tapir. Gosport branch, also National Membership Secretary until 2012. March 9. Aged 90.

John Waters L/Sea. Served as an Ordinary Seaman on board HMS Liverpool 1948-50 and founded HMS Liverpool Association also served in HMS Glasgow and HM Submarines Aurochs, Anchorite and Solent. Founder member of Brierley Hill and West Bromwich Submariners Association, where he had served as Secretary, also member of HMS Ganges Association. March 11. Aged 83.

John Coulson L/Sea RP3. Served in HM Submarines Tabard and Aeneas. North Staffs branch. March 20. Aged 78.

Robert ‘Bob’ Greenshields FCPO (EL). Served in HM Submarines Seascout, Scotsman, Tactician, Grampus, Warspite and Valiant. Essex branch. January 14. Aged 81.

Ronald ‘Ron’ Craig LM(E). Served in HM Submarines Alcide, Sleuth, Selene and Subtle. North East branch. January 9. Aged 83.

btinternet.com or tel: 01733 234655.

October 2015

Regulating Branch & Royal Navy Police Association annual reunion takes place from October 2-3 at HMS Excellent. All retired Regulators and serving Naval Police are welcome. See the website at <http://rba93.com> or contact social secretary W Dick at maawgd@sky.com or tel 023 9234 5228.

HMS Ajax and RPVA: 50th annual reunion will be held at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent. Dinner on October 7 with church service and AGM on October 8. Family members of crew who served in cruiser and crew members who served in the frigate are most welcome. Application forms available from: Malcolm Collis at malcolm.collis@gmail.com, tel 01366 377945 or download from www.hmsajax.org Closing date is August 28.

HMS Troubridge Association: Reunion at the Royal Hotel, Scarborough, from October 9-11. Contact Bryan Pace at bryan@hmstroubridge.com or see website www.hmstroubridge.com or write to 665 West Mar Road, Howell, MI 48855, USA, or tel 01524 863416.

HMS/m Repulse Reunion Association are holding their next reunion from October 16-19 at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea. For more information or booking forms contact Frank Scutt at frank.scutt@gmail.com, see www.hms-repulse.co.uk or tel 01480 393228.

Survey Ships Association reunion will be held from October 23-26 at the 4* Menzies Mickleover Court Hotel, Derby. For information on membership and reunion send an SAE to the Secretary SSA, 17 Eliza Mackenzie Court, Lindisfarne Close, Cosham, Portsmouth PO6 2SB, email: secretary@surveyships.org.uk or tel 023 9232 4795.

November 2015

The ASWI Association (formerly TASI Association 1955) 60th Reunion Dinner and Dance will take place on November 14 at the Royal Beach Hotel, St Helens Parade, Portsmouth PO4 0RN. Tickets £40pp. For details see www.aswi.co.uk or contact Bob Burton at bobburton@aswi.co.uk or tel 01752 668380.

HMS Relentless Association third annual reunion will take place from November 27-30 at the Royal Beach Hotel, St Helens Parade, Southsea PO4 0RN. All ex-Rusty Rs 1942-1968 and their guests are welcome. For booking and more information contact IOW Tours at enquiries@iowtours.com, tel 01983 405116, contact the association secretary at secretary@hmsrelentless.co.uk or tel 023 9259 9640. See www.hmsrelentless.co.uk for more about the association.

Senior Naval Appointments

Rear Admiral T M Lowe to be National Hydrographer and Deputy Chief Executive UK Hydrographic Office with effect from August 11.

Cdre J S Weale to be promoted Rear Admiral and to be Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland in July.

Capt P V Walton promoted Commodore and Commodore Devonport Flotilla from March 24.

Capt J G Higham promoted Commodore and Head Programming within Defence Equipment and Support from March.

Capt S Dainton promoted Commodore and Assistant Chief of Staff Training within Navy Command HQ from April.

Capt P J Sparkes to be promoted Commodore and to be Commodore Portsmouth Flotilla from June.

Capt A A Jordan as CO Maritime Warfare School from April.

Captain M R Burningham to be Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff Personnel Strategy Team Leader from May 5.

Col M F Pierson to be Assistant Head Maritime within the Defence Concepts and Doctrine Centre from June.

Cdr A P Ewen promoted Captain and Assistant Director Operations Support

within Joint Helicopter Command from February 26.

Lt Colonel C S Middleton RM promoted Colonel and Deputy Head Operations within Defence Intelligence from March 9.

Cdr C R Miller promoted Captain and to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Resources and Plans within Navy Command HQ from March.

Cdr C M Mearns promoted Captain and Captain of the Base Clyde from April.

Cdr J D L Boddington promoted Captain and Analysis and Plans Deputy Head within the Military Aviation Authority from April 13.

Lt Col R J Cooper-Simpson RM promoted Colonel and Military Assistant to Director General International Military Staff from April 20.

Lt Colonel S Chapman RM to be promoted Colonel and to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Career Management within Navy Command HQ from May.

Lt Col G W Fraser RM to be promoted Colonel and to be Commanding Officer 43 Cdo Royal Marines from June.

Cdr C D Goodsell to be promoted Captain and to be Deputy Assistant Chief

of Staff J3 B within Permanent Joint HQ from July.

Cdr S Krosnar-Clarke promoted A/Capt and Director Site Synchronisation Op Shader from March 1.

Lt Col J S Holt RM promoted A/Col and Deputy Commander (Operations) Op Shader from March 1.

Cdr G Hesling promoted A/Capt and Defence Business Development Manager within the UK Hydrographic Office from April 20.


Cdr S H Wright to be promoted A/Capt and to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Navy Legal Service within Navy Command HQ from May 12.

Cdr T D Ferns to be promoted A/Capt and to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Logistics Operations and Plans within Navy Command HQ from June 1.


Cdr M G W Rance to be promoted A/Capt and to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Logistics Capability within Navy Command HQ from June 2.

Cdr P R Russell as Captain Sea Cadets MSSC Headquarters from April 20.

Lt S M Telford as CO of URNU London from April 20.



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The bases of victory

CURIOSITY is inevitably aroused when gliding up the Hamoaze or cruising past the Semaphore Tower and seeing respectively the vast dockyard complexes at Devonport or Portsmouth. These places reflect centuries of Royal Navy presence, but how did their impressive collections of buildings, dry docks, quays and equipment come into being?

These questions can now be answered as English Heritage has recently published what amounts to a blockbuster tome on the whole subject of Fleet Support, writes *Jim Humberstone*.

With text penned and material assembled by the foremost authority on Naval dockyards, Jonathan Coad, **Support for the Fleet. Architecture and Engineering of the Royal Navy's Bases 1700-1914** (£90 ISBN 978-1-84802-055-9) sets the record straight in the most impressive fashion. It is now possible to comprehend the magnitude and complexity of the subject.

Reflecting some 30 years or more of investigation and research, it covers support facilities at home and abroad – ranging from British Columbia to the Falklands, Japan to Bermuda – and deals with the whole gamut of installations and functions from dry docks to victualling yards, from barracks to hospitals and training establishments.

Some 450 pages in length, it is a joy to handle and dip into, filled with a most mouth-watering gathering of photographs and plans, maps, prints and drawings.

The contents illustrate just over 200 years of Royal Navy base evolution, covering the rise of the British Empire and the supremacy during this period of the Royal Navy, containing sections on bases and installations as distinct in character and location as Esquimaux, Yokohama, Wei Hai Wei and Simon's Town; the very smallest locations have been plotted world wide on a series of excellent maps.

The scope of the book broadens significantly when dealing with the history of Naval offices; the presence of the Admiralty at locations such as Somerset House and, when relocated to its well-known Whitehall complex, is acknowledged and described in detail.

Each phase in the evolution of the modern warship was inevitably accompanied by a requirement for new provisions on land. Building ships of iron and steel instead of wood involved sophisticated new technologies, leading to the provision of engineering workshops and in-house foundries.

In particular the change from sail to steam brought the need for provision for the storage of fossil fuels such as coal and, subsequently, oil – hence the presence of small, sometimes quite remote or isolated British establishments, given over to the functions of the coaling depot. Aden is perhaps the most familiar of these, but the author introduces us to a galaxy of other, less-well-known stations. Who knew that the British Imperial presence held modest sway in places like Samaria Island in the Coral Sea, Castries on St Lucia or Henjam in the Gulf?

Moving to home waters, the author covers the more familiar story of the British Naval dockyards. Here again the author comes up with what may be surprising revelations. There is a lot of detail on the genesis of a victualling base at Haulbowline – an island in Cork harbour – where a great deal of effort and expenditure was expended in the first years of the 19th Century to create a fully-equipped dockyard. Thankfully much evidence of the RN presence still remains.

The evolution and development of locations like Whale Island, Priddy's Hard and the unique historic complex at Chatham become so much clearer through the medium of aerial photographs. Notable too is the inclusion of a photograph of the spectacular staircase ceiling painting at Chatham Dockyard's Commissioner's House by Britain's greatest exponent of the art, Sir William Thornhill.

The story of Fleet Support would be incomplete without an account of the personalities involved, like the legendary Rennies – father and son – who figured significantly in the story of dockyard construction, with works at Chatham and Devonport in the 19th Century. S P Cockerell, architect father of the designer of the Ashmolean Museum, also participated in work to Naval dockyards and even Thomas Telford – later to become one of the great road and bridge builders of the era – was employed at Portsmouth early in his career.

Perhaps of equal significance was the contribution made by their military counterparts. The author deals at some length with the various works designed and overseen by Royal Engineers during the 1800s. Sapper officers such as Henry Brandreth and Francis Fowke were able to bring specialist science-based engineering skills to bear on the problems involved in the expansion of dockyard facilities at home and abroad.

Finally, as is now well-known, Marc Brunel, father of the famous Isambard, collaborated at Portsmouth with Henry Maudslay to produce one of the very first machine tools, in the form of block-making machinery. This innovation was aided by the new power source, the steam engine, installed by Samuel Bentham.

Highly impressive though the book is, there do appear to be one or two omissions. Firstly, an account of the great defensive works that grew up as a necessary complement to the Naval dockyards must clearly await its own equally-comprehensive and erudite volume. Beyond that however, one or two support locations appear to be missing – perhaps the most obvious of these is the submarine and one-time Coastal Forces base adjoining Fort Blockhouse and Haslar Creek in Portsmouth Harbour. Looking further afield, there is Alexandria; this doesn't figure in the index.

However, while the above matters may appear to have escaped the net, it is churlish to carp.

And rather expensive though it may appear at £90 (copies are available for under £60), the book is eminently worthy of such an outlay – this will remain the definitive source of material on the history of the British Naval Dockyard for many years to come.

It should be regarded as a fitting tribute to the many thousands of engineers, supervisors and workfolk who, sometimes against all odds, created the vast support network at home and across the globe, which kept the Royal Navy supreme during the greatest period of its history.

The road to – and first few months of – WW1

THE Naval Route To The Abyss: The Anglo-German Naval Race 1895-1914 is the latest volume of documents issued by the Navy Records Society.

German documents have been edited by Dr Frank Naegler of Potsdam and Professor Dr Michael Epkenhans, academic head of the Centre for Military History and Social Science at Potsdam, writes *Prof Eric Grove*.

They clearly show how the German Fleet, in a remarkably weak state in the mid-1890s, was transformed, largely under the influence of Admiral Tirpitz, supported by the erratic enthusiasm of the Kaiser, into a deterrent force designed to be powerful enough to give the British Empire pause in confronting the German Empire's rise to a great power status, that would inevitably create political and economic rivalries.

In the event, the growth of that fleet increased tensions rather than diminished them, despite the fact that the political difficulties in obtaining the support of the Reichstag (a more democratically elected body than the British parliament at the time) acted as a constant constraint, limiting the German Navy's investment in available new technologies like submarines and aircraft and preventing any superiority in capital ships beyond the two to three, which it was thought might ensure deterrence.

In the event, this policy was falling apart by 1914. Tirpitz wrote that "the situation is collapsing for the Navy." As the editors put it, "Tirpitz now frankly admitted defeat." It was tragedy indeed that the state-sponsored Serb terrorist who precipitated the July crisis, left insufficient time for the further Anglo-German detente that was clearly coming; Britain quite clearly won the naval race.

The editor of the British sections is Dr Matthew Seligmann of Brunel University. He had a challenging task because, as his introduction makes clear, the pre-1914 history of British Naval policy has become perhaps the most contested area of the subject. His introduction is quite a fair survey of the state of the arguments, but then the editor rather spoils the effect by his attempts to dismiss the work of Dr Nicholas Lambert and to support his own rather eccentric views, notably that the British battle cruisers were developed to run down armed German liners. Unfortunately for him, Dr Lambert has just published a devastating and most convincing critique of this in a recent issue of *Historical Journal*.

I remain much less convinced than Dr Seligmann that the Royal Navy concentrated on the German threat as early as he thinks. The renaming of the Home Fleet – itself a new title as the 'Channel Fleet' in the famous first Fisher reorganisation was surely a demonstration of an orientation as much against France as Germany.

Only in 1907, with the recreation of the Home Fleet might one say there was a significant deployment primarily aimed at Germany, as my student Dr Chris Buckley pointed out; his thesis is an important new source I was pleased to find cited in the book. I do agree with Dr Seligmann, however, that the commitment to 'Flotilla Defence' in the North Sea was not so clear-cut as argued in the past by Dr Lambert.

THE GROVE REVIEW

Seligmann does, however, produce some fascinating material, not least a concluding memorandum by Jellicoe – Second Sea Lord and C-in-C designate of the Home Fleet – to First Sea Lord Winston Churchill, written in reply to a minute claiming clear British superiority.

The pessimism in Jellicoe's paper was verging on the pathological. Perhaps, most remarkable is the assertion that secondary armaments of German – but not British ships – should be taken into account in comparing relative broadsides! As Churchill minuted – correctly – Jellicoe had given "insufficient reason for excluding this powerful armament to our disadvantage."

Churchill was clearly far from impressed and it was a tragedy for the performance of the Grand Fleet in the war that the decision to replace the highly-experienced Admiral Sir George Callaghan with Jellicoe at the outbreak of war went ahead as planned, despite the clear evidence of Jellicoe's unfitness to command an operational formation with sufficient aggression, whatever the many qualities this latter officer had in other areas.

Admiral James Goldrick discusses this matter in his excellent new book **Before Jutland: The Naval War in Northern European Waters August 1914-February 1915** (Naval Institute Press £36.50, ISBN 9781591143499).

He points out that Jellicoe was unhappy with the change and that "the fleet was shocked", it being "grossly unfair that he should be dismissed in such a cavalier fashion." He agrees with the critics that the change may not have been as wise as it seemed to Churchill and others at the time. Jellicoe, the author argues convincingly, had not been given a sufficient "break between appointments customary for senior officers and certainly desirable after service in an undermanned and overworked Admiralty." Perceptively, he points out that Jellicoe had little experience outside fleets. "This was no way to develop an understanding of the need for individual initiative in commanders."

This is but one of the sound and fair judgements that is the outstanding feature of this book. This a reflection of the author who, in the tradition

of Richmond and Roskill, but uniquely today, combines the ability of a first-rate historian with a highly successful career as a professional naval officer.

His first stab at the subject of the transition of the Royal Navy to war in 1914-15 was published in 1954. Since then, as he argues in his revealing introduction, naval history has been transformed by greater use of the archives and "a recognition of the complexity of the problems that navies faced in an era of technological change." Yet he was troubled by the growing lack of comprehension of "the way in which ships were worked and fought in 1914-18."

Then, as he disarmingly says, "I grew up." His posts of increasing responsibility made him aware that "the more I listened to historians and the more I reflected on their analysis, the more I found they were influencing my own approach to contemporary problem solving."

"The greater my sea command experience, the more I realised that effective doctrine and equally effective command and control arrangements were central to effective naval operations. I also came to understand that success in exploiting an emerging situation, however ambiguous it may appear at first, has a direct relationship with the effort that has been expended on considering the operational context beforehand."

"If there were a clear parallel between my experience and the events of a century ago, it was in the way in which communications and thus command and control were evolving at a breakneck pace, in ways difficult enough to understand in their immediate effects, but that had unexpected and yet-to-be understood second- and third-order consequences for the conduct of operations at sea."

The difficulty in a pre-GPS age of finding accurately one's own position, demonstrated fundamental problems faced by the officers of 1914 in knowing where they and the enemy were. The extent and multiplicity of technological developments were an enormous and unprecedented professional challenge. As the author goes on: "The pressures

at all levels within navies were therefore intensifying in the years immediately before the outbreak of war in ways that were not understood nor necessarily recognized. In short, those involved were struggling to learn a new language of naval warfare with an incomplete dictionary and very little grammar."

These insights have been quoted at length because they demonstrate the enormous strengths and ground-breaking quality of this book. It should be read by anyone interested not only in the period, but also those with an interest in how navies respond to the interaction of the challenges of war, as well as fundamentally new technological challenges. As Admiral Goldrick wisely points out, there are contemporary echoes. The navies of 1914 went to war starved of proper training and experience because of stringent financial provision by their governments. This should strike a popular chord today.

My only real criticism of this work is the title, *Before Jutland*. It has been extended to cover the Baltic and not just the North Sea, but it stops no fewer than 15 months before Jutland. Although the Dardanelles preoccupation did dominate British maritime strategy for much of this intervening period, there was a lot of activity going on in the northern waters upon which the book concentrates, both in the North Sea and Baltic. Marder took his second volume of *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow* to 'the eve of Jutland'. I have to admit some sympathy with the publisher and author in coming up with a catchy title, but something like *From Scapa Flow to Dogger Bank* might have been at least more accurate.

Obtaining these two important and highly-desirable volumes at reasonable prices has its complexities. *The Naval Route to the Abyss* (Ashgate, ISBN 9781472440938) costs no less than £90 from normal sellers. No ordinary reader should pay this. All they have to do is to contact the website of the Navy Records Society, pay their subscription of £40 and they will have much cheaper access to this – and other – Society publications both hardback and electronic.

Similarly, *Before Jutland* can be obtained more cheaply (\$26.97 – about £18.50) by those who join the US Naval Institute.





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Sliding at 70mph not for the fainthearted

IMAGINE yourself driving down an extremely narrow, steep and winding icy lane at 70mph. Now imagine doing that with no brakes and steering with your feet, **writes Lt Jase Douglas.**

Throw into the mix doing all of this lying on your back on a sled six inches from the ground going feet first in nothing but a wafer-thin lycra suit. You now have an inkling of just how the RN Luge team get their kicks.

Earlier this year the team headed to La Plagne, France, for this year's RN, Tri-Service and Great British Luge Championships.

This was the first time that any of the eight-strong team, including one beginner and one novice, had slid at this track.

The sliders initially start approximately two-thirds of the way down the track and can progress to the top of the start ramp prior to race day.

Unfortunately Lt Matt Bone, our team novice, crashed heavily during the first week and badly bruised both his feet, ankles and lower legs, and was ruled out for the event.

In typical matelot fashion, the team were soon comparing their new 'full sleeve' black, blue and purple bruises and accompanying ice burns accrued from various bumps. With the team applying increasing amount of heat rub and padding, we entered the competition week with ever-increasing confidence and spirit.

All of the team had now progressed up to the base of the start ramp and were now focussed on perfecting their racing lines. Run times decreased markedly as speeds increased to well over 100kph.

Once ready, the sliders moved on to the top of the start ramp. This adds a new, technically difficult dimension but provides the advantage of allowing the slider to explosively launch themselves right from the very start of their run, reducing run times by up to three seconds, a significant step-up considering that competitors cover the 1.2km track distance in only 46 – 50 seconds. The physical strains on the body now also increase as the athletes are routinely subjected to extreme g-forces of 2 to 4g.

The Army and RAF had already completed their respective single Service championships at La Plagne earlier in the season.

By now the RN team casualty list included Wtr Lauren Souter, our only beginner and only female contestant.

The sliders each have two runs, times are aggregated and the fastest overall is declared the winner.

Many posted personal bests during the course of the competition, which culminated in

LET(WE) Graham Humm being declared the RN Men's Champion for the 2014-15 season.

The Inter-Service Championships were held on the penultimate day of the competition. The Army and RAF teams had been setting the pace over the previous ten days. The RN team made a valiant effort to bridge the gap but, despite a very strong performance, including several further personal bests from many of the team, ultimately finished in third place with the Army retaining their title.

Team manager Lt Ed Rolls said: "This has been a successful championship.

"It is testament to the courage and

determination of the team that they are able to rub shoulders with, as well as closely challenge, professional sportsmen that are competing on the world and European circuits."

Several of the RN team were selected to compete in the GB Luge Championships where, despite one team member pushing himself to the limit and escaping a big crash on the final bend at 70mph, team members surpassed all expectations by finishing between ninth and 17th places.

Team captain Lt Martin McArdle said: "The most satisfying aspect has been witnessing the evident determination and courage of team members coupled with the rapid development in confidence, self-belief and team spirit as they bridged the gulf between occasional racer and full-time professionals."

It is hoped that, subject to improved support and funding, the Royal Navy team will be able to better this year's performance levels. It is entirely possible that the RN might one day produce a Team GB luge champion.

If you interested in trying out for the luge team contact Lt Rolls or Lt McArdle at rnluge@gmail.com

● Team captain Lt Martin McArdle competes at La Plagne in France

Picture: Sgt Paddy Hill



Trophy crowns five-year quest

SAILORS from HMS Collingwood's boxing squad secured their first trophy win in five years at the Eastern Region Championships.

During an evening competition which saw military and local civilian clubs compete in eight bouts, one preliminary and two championships, Collingwood's team secured three wins overall.

Amateur boxing clubs (ABC) from Gosport, City of Portsmouth, Littlehampton and Ferndown were invited to compete against sailors from HMS Sultan, Collingwood and Iron Duke.

Collingwood submitted eight boxers to compete over several different weight categories.

The base's winners were AB Sullivan in the Special Light Heavyweight contest, AB Kelly in the Special Lightweight and AB Latham-Williams, who took the Championship in the Light Welterweight category.

Collingwood's boxing squad head coach PO Daz Hoare said: "After starting pre-season in July 2014 and setting the club goals, we have achieved much more than anticipated.

"From not winning a trophy in over five years and now not only drawing the annual dinner show in December but to come away with the Eastern Region Championships I am so proud of my team.

"The commitment they show to training, especially during a time when they are studying hard for exams, shows true dedication; to me they all show core Naval values."

Just missing out on a win in the female 64kg section, was LET Pope. POET Morton also just missed out on a win in the show closer to James Lee from Ferndown ABC.

Both HMS Collingwood and HMS Sultan shared the winners' title.

Setting the bar high

THE Royal Navy Powerlifting Association fielded a strong team for the British Drug Free Powerlifting Association National Championships.

Cpl Jason Thomson (MDHU Portsmouth) took second place in the bench press and first place in the 75kg deadlift.

LCH Wes McGuinness (HMS Trenchant) took second in the squat and fourth in the 82.5kg bench press.

Relative newcomer LPT Andrew Davey (RNAS Cudmore) astounded everyone by setting British, European and World Military/Police/Fire Service records in the 90kg bench press with 162.5kg.

The 100kg category saw Mne Brad Smith of CLR and PO Chris Martin of HMS Vigilant try to set a new British MPF Squat record. PO Martin led the way with a record lift of 216kg only for Mne Smith to break it minutes later with 220.5kg.

LPT Regaina Cawley (HMS Collingwood) won the 63kg category, setting British MPF records for squat, bench press, deadlift and total in the full power event.

Cpl Thomson and LCH McGuinness took third in the 75kg and 82.5kg categories with PO Martin fourth in the 100kg category and Mne Smith second in the 100kg junior event.

Seniors stick to a winning formula

THE Royal Navy men's hockey team triumphed at the Inter-Service outdoor tournament.

Some 400 players, officials and spectators converged on the Alan Walker Stadium at Burnaby Road, Portsmouth, for the two-day festival.

Day one saw the holders the Army play the RAF at each of the levels – senior men, senior women, under-25 men, masters men and masters women.

Day two and all of the Navy's morning matches were against the RAF with the RN under-25 side losing 5-1.

The RN women masters, who had never won an Inter-Service match, got off to a great start as Lt Cdr Charlie Yemm got two quick goals.

Lt Cdr Sam Jones scored a third before half time. In the second half Yemm completed her hat-trick. Susie Bythell made it five and the game finished 5-1.

Navy masters men then took on the RAF, who had lost 2-1 to the Army the previous day.

Full back Paul Congerton scored for the Navy following an opening goal by the RAF, who then went 2-1 up. It was left to England masters midfielder Luke Watson to score from a high lob to make it 2-2, which is how the match finished.

The RAF raced to a 3-0 lead over the Navy women. Laura Raynes converted a penalty corner to make it 3-1. The game finished 4-2 to the RAF.

The RN senior men took on the RAF in their opening match, taking the game 1-0 thanks to Mne Kyle Pinnock.

The final round of matches saw the RN take on the Army at the various levels.



● The Army, in red, close in on the RN's John Hamilton

Picture: Lt Co Charles Jackman

The RN under-25s shipped three goals as the Army juniors held on to the title. The RN finished in third place.

The RN women masters paid the price for pulling out all the stops in beating the RAF. The Army remained as champions with the RN in third place.

The RN senior women almost halved the traditional deficit against the Army, who remained champions.

The RN mens masters were unlucky not to win their competition. Having had the better of the game versus the RAF to draw 2-2, it was much the same story against the Army holders.

Tom Palmer scored for the Army early, Timmy Mallet then replied for the RN only for Palmer to restore the Army lead before half time.

Luke Watson got it back to 2-2 then Alex Senneck put the Army 3-2 up with a well-directed short corner. Again the Navy – this time in the form of Neil Rogers – got the score back on equal terms. In the dying minutes two more chances went begging for the RN.

The final match saw the RN senior men take on the Army. An end-to-end game saw the Navy go ahead thanks to Allan Gouick.

Thirty minutes later PTI Rowan Edwards made it 2-0 with veteran Welsh international Danny Makaruk scoring in the second half to end the match 3-0.

The RN senior men have now won the Inter-Service championships 14 times. It took the side 95 years to win the first seven, with the remaining seven victories coming in the last 12 years.

Diamond's dazzling display

HMS Diamond turned on the style on the football field as they thrashed counterparts from the giant American aircraft carrier Theodore Roosevelt.

In a dazzling display the Diamond boys ran out 15-2 winners against a side selected from 5,000-plus crew members.

But there were no hard feelings, with both teams shaking hands and enjoying a drink after the match at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth.

Brian Flood, 31, from the Theodore Roosevelt which was on a five-day visit to the city, said: "It's fantastic to get out here and meet some of the Brits.

"It's nice to interact with the local teams rather than just go and see the sights. I have been playing my whole life so to get to play a game here is really

exciting."

Joseph Vallely, 24, from HMS Diamond, said: "It was a good experience. It's always good for morale.

"We were with the American team all day as they came to our ship, so it's been good for them to see what our life is like and hopefully we will get a chance to visit their ship to see what their life is like on board."

Portsmouth was the first stop on USS Theodore Roosevelt's global deployment.

The visit formed part of an ongoing partnership between the US and UK on carrier operations in the run-up to the Royal Navy's two new 65,000-tonne ships – HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales – entering service.



● HMS Diamond's players thrashed the American visitors

Delight for busy Phillips

AB FRASER Phillips won his first bout as he made his debut for HMS Collingwood at an open boxing show at Wimbledon sports centre.

The judges' decision was unanimous as Phillips made easy work of Gym 01's Clark.

The penultimate match of the 15-bout event saw Collingwood's AB Richard Dowling take on Gym 01's Wilday, with the latter winning on points after a fast and furious encounter.

Get your rods out for the dabs



● WO1 Tim Broughton with his 38lb carp landed in Christchurch Lake in Oxfordshire

IT'S time to try to beat WO1 Tim Broughton's catch – a 35.8lb carp.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Angling Association have a series of events for this season.

WO1 Broughton's massive catch was landed at Linch Hill, Christchurch Lake, Oxfordshire, and was the first event of the season.

A gravel patch at 68 yards baited with CC Moore Odyssey XXX provided the winning combination.

Dates for your diary are:

June 2-3: Sea RNRM Boat Championships, Plymouth; **June 9:** Game Services competition, Grafham Water; **June 10:** Game RN open and pairs, Grafham Water; **June 11:** Coarse (carp) coaching session, Horseshoe Lake, Gloucestershire; **June 11:** Game novice coaching, Grafham Water; **June 12:** Coarse novice coaching day, Packington Somers; **June 12-14:** Coarse (Carp), RNRM Inter Region Round 3, Horseshoe Lake, Gloucestershire; **June 13:** Coarse RNRM angling championships, Packington Somers, Mowlands, Coventry;

June 14: Coarse RNRM angling championships, Barston Fishery main lake, Solihull; **June 23:** Game pre-AMFC 3 coaching, Draycott (near Rugby); **June 24:** Game, AMFC 3, Draycott.

June 29-July 2: Course Inter-Service, Forest Lane, York; **June 30-July 1:** Game, Services rivers match, Abington, Scotland; **June 30-July 1:** Game Inter-Commands match; **July 2:** Coarse (carp) coaching session, Wraysbury 1, Middlesex; **July 3-5:** Coarse (carp) RNRM Inter-region round 4, Wraysbury 1; **July 8:** Game, novice coaching, Rutland or Grafham; **July 9:** Game pre-AMFC 4, Eyebrook, Northamptonshire; **July 10:** Game AMFC 4, Eyebrook; **July 12:** Coarse coaching session, River Trent, Nottingham; **July 14:** Coarse RNRM Inter-region round 2, River Trent; **July 30:** Coarse (carp) coaching session, Southwick Park, Portsmouth.

For further details about each event contact:

carp-secretary@rmandmaa.org.uk, coarse-secretary@rmandmaa.org.uk, game-secretary@rmandmaa.org.uk or sea-secretary@rmandmaa.org.uk



● CPO Clayborough

Revival thanks to return of bats

TABLE tennis or ping pong, is there really any difference?

Some would say not, however, the success of the ping pong World Championships held earlier this year at Alexandra Palace would suggest that the revival of the sandpaper bat is firmly under way.

There are two main differences, the type of bat used (sandpaper or rubber) and the "double point" ball adds another dimension that you don't get in table tennis.

Both these sports are growing in popularity not just as a competitive sport but socially too.

This year's Inter Region Table Tennis Championships took place at HMS Temeraire and for the first time seized the opportunity to introduce a sandpaper bat competition alongside the more commonly used rubber bat competition.

This was won by CPO Graham Clayborough from Manchester AFCCO 2-1 in a thrilling display against Capt Tim Currass of Abbeywood.

The table tennis competition was a tightly-contested encounter with the Eastern Region consisting of players from Sultan and the RM Band coming out on top with the Northern region as runners up.

In the combined singles event, the trophy was retained for a third year running by Sultan's CPOET(ME) Daren Godden in the final against CPO Graham Clayborough which at 3-0 was closer than the score suggests.

If you are interested in taking up table tennis or ping pong for the first time or competing in future events please contact CPO Daren Godden on Godden415@mod.uk

Flying the flag

TRAINEES and staff from Victory Squadron at HMS Collingwood were flag bearers for three of the Six Nations rugby matches at Twickenham.

Training Officer Lt Samira Pashneh-Tala said: "Victory Squadron always takes great pride in being offered these prestigious and once-in-a-lifetime opportunities."

New pitch

AN artificial pitch has opened at HMS Sultan in Gosport.

Base CO Capt Trevor Gullely cut the ribbon to mark the opening of the new surface, which was installed thanks to a grant from the RN and RM Sports Lottery.

We are champs at last

THE Royal Navy seniors have been crowned Inter-Service football champions.

The Dark Blues settled quickly but the RAF took the lead and quickly added another to go in 2-0 up at half-time.

The RN stormed into the second half and their persistence paid off when AET Ben Chambers won a penalty, which AB Leon Cashman struck home.

The momentum was now with the RN and AB Cashman made it all square with a second penalty.

The draw, which was played at Shrewsbury Town FC, meant the RN were waiting on the result of the Army v RAF game the following week before taking on the Army at Fratton Park.

The Army arrived in Portsmouth on the back of a 4-0 victory over the RAF, meaning the final game – the Southern Counties Cup – was a winner-takes-all affair.

The Navy took the lead thanks to AB Cashman and it remained 1-0 at half-time.

LAET Tom Ardley made it 2-0 before the Army pulled a goal back from the penalty spot after a foul which resulted in the Navy going down to ten men.

The Navy threw caution to the wind and a free kick saw the ball land at the feet of CPO Todd, who poked it home for victory – and the title, the RN's first such honour for 11 years.

US rugby team's perfect season

UNITED Services Portsmouth Rugby FC are not only celebrating promotion this season, but also achieving something quite special – a perfect record, writes **Nabil Hassan of BBC Sport**.

Their stats tell the story of an amazing season – played 18, won 18 with 18 bonus points. A clean sweep.

The London & South East Hampshire One side are currently the only club in English senior rugby to end the season with such a record.

"It's unbelievable, I can't put it into words," said head coach Graham Butterworth. "It's still weird."

US Portsmouth have a squad drawn from the Navy, Army and civilians, and will now take their place next season in London Three South West.

Butterworth said the backroom team realised pretty early on that they had a special group of players.

"After four games we'd put some really high scores up – we beat Isle of Wight 65-19 and I realised the calibre in the squad," he continued.

"We played Fordingbridge away, and they have always been a strong side, and we thumped them 40-20. That was the point when I thought things were going to be different. It came to December and we were unbeaten and we realised then we could

achieve the perfect record."

The club, who are supported by the Royal Navy Rugby Union, were trailing 21-7 against Bognor and Butterworth, who was away in Malta, admitted to some nervous moments as the season drew to a close and the chance of the record drew nearer.

"At the end we did feel the pressure because with three games to go we were unbeaten and could make history as a club," he added.

"Saturday was unbelievable. The boys were 21-7 down just after half-time, I was getting regular updates from my father and wife and they suddenly galvanised and managed to hammer Bognor 49-21.

"I couldn't hide my excitement and probably drunk a little bit too much. It's still sinking in. I missed the party but the boys certainly enjoyed themselves."

The Bulldogs scored an incredible 807 points this season, conceding 266, and Butterworth said the entire squad deserved huge praise for their achievements.

"All the players who have put on the jersey have been fantastic," he added.

"We have some very accomplished finishers such as Tom Blewitt, Ross Fairbairn is an old Chichester player and has been fantastic, as has Martin Hoskins the club captain, Luke Peters, a Cyprus international, Stephen Gee and Nathan Bond also.

Impressive medal tally for wounded warriors

A TEAM of Royal Marines from Hasler Company returned with an impressive medal haul from the Wounded Warrior Trials in California.

The 12-strong team, along with three support personnel, from the Naval Service Recovery Centre in Plymouth, joined an allied squad of Servicemen from Australia, Colombia, France, Georgia, Germany, New Zealand and the Netherlands.

The competition, held at Camp Pembleton, is used for the US Marine Corps to hone their sporting skills and prepare their athletes prior to their Wounded Warrior Games in June.

The event comprised eight sports – archery, cycling, shooting, swimming, track athletics, field athletics, sitting volleyball and wheelchair basketball – over eight days and involved more than 300 wounded, ill, or injured USMC and international competitors.

Many of the competitors had suffered both mentally and physically either from recent operational tours or traumatic life-changing events.

"To be involved in the recovery of these men and then watch them achieve life goals was a true privilege," said Capt Sam Shephard, Hasler's CO.

"Whilst the medal tally is impressive, the real success

Hasler Company haul		
C/Sgt Lee Spencer	bronze	swimming
Cpl Paul Vice MC	gold	swimming
	silver	track and field
	bronze	shooting
Cpl Philip Eaglesham	bronze	shooting
Cpl Andy Lock	bronze	swimming
LCpl Chris Hayes	gold	cycling
Mne Andy Rijckmans	gold	cycling
Mne Alan Le-Sueur	bronze	swimming
	bronze	track and field
Mne Nick Goldsmith	bronze	swimming
Mne Gus Hurst	3 golds	swimming
	silver	track and field
	gold	cycling
	silver	cycling
Mne Luke Darlington		

cannot be placed on the mantelpiece.

"The difference the games made to all competitors was there for all to see – they visibly grew in stature, proud men who have shared adversity but who stand together as a team to say – *Eat In Pugna* – we are still in the fight.

Cpl Andy Lock added: "Whilst I have been here I do not feel like I have PTSD."



● Members of the Royal Marines team in California

Corps blimey, that's some punch ...

ROYAL Marine Dan 'Benny' Bentley from 45 Cdo prepares to land a punch on Cpl Olly Sinden of 30 Cdo.

The super heavyweight category bout was one of many held at the Corps Boxing Championships.

Fighters from around the country gathered at Commando Training Centre in Devon for a series of elimination bouts the week before the actual championships.

Most Royal Marines units were represented including 30, 40, 42 and 45 Commando, Commando Logistics Regiment, CTCRM, and Royal Marines Reserves London and Bristol.

■ More boxing, see page 46

Picture: LA(Phot) Will Haigh



Oarless team are awesome



● AET Emily Newton won silver at the English Indoor Rowing Championships

Picture: Anne Yates

THE Royal Navy Indoor Rowing Team were crowned Inter-Service champions for the second year running to crown a great season.

Despite missing some world-class performers, including CPO Collin Leiba, the Senior Service won more medals over 2k and 500m than the Army and RAF combined.

The highlight for the RN at the championships, held at RAF High Wycombe, was a convincing win in the ten-minute relay race against the Army.

Col Matt Jackson (MOD), Lt Cdr Jim Hyde (HMS Collingwood), Lt Cdr Rory West (HMS Excellent), Lt Craig Guest and WO1 Andy Patience (both Collingwood) and AET Emily Newton (HMS Sultan) displayed great determination, superb teamwork and co-ordination to stun the other two services.

The victory was remarkable as all five team members had already rowed maximum effort 2k and 500m races, whilst the Army Guardsmen had rowed the relay fresh having shield clear of the demanding individual races.

Lt Cdr West rowed a 2k personal best of 6min 34.7sec to win the

men's heavyweight 45+ contest, while AET Newton won the women's open lightweight 2k in 7min 50.1sec.

Lt Ruth West (HMNB Nelson) rowed a 2k personal best in 7min 59.7sec to win the women's heavyweight 25+. Her husband Craig narrowly missed out on a personal best as he finished second in the men's heavyweight 25+ category.

LAET Marie Roffey (HMS Sultan) was ecstatic to row a 2k personal best of 8min 34.7sec in the women's lightweight 25+.

Two weeks prior to the Inter-Services championships, members of the Royal Navy team achieved success at the English Indoor Rowing Championships at the Manchester Velodrome.

Sgt Tim Hughes (CTCRM) set the tone as he won the first 2k race of the day to become the men's heavyweight 30+ English Champion in 6min 28.6sec.

LAET Roffey was third in the women's lightweight 30+ 2k and runner up in the 500m.

AET Newton finished second in the women's lightweight open, her success built on long-term endurance gained in triathlons.

CPO Leiba (MCTA), who

finished third in the World Championships, found himself in a race of top quality as he took fifth place in the men's heavyweight 50+ contest with a time of 6min 34.5sec. He won the 500m in 1min 21.7sec.

The other 14 RN rowers who took part in the world event in Boston all reaped the benefit of a long-term training regime.

Craig Guest, who finished the men's heavyweight 30+ in 6min 28.2sec, and LPT Izzy Molyneux-Jacob (HMNB Nelson), who finished the women's open lightweight in 7min 51.8sec, both rowed 2k personal bests.

Earlier in the season Jim Thomson finished third in the very competitive men's heavyweight 2k 40+ at the British Indoor Rowing Championships at the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park Velodrome in London.

LAET Roffey began her season's medal collection as runner-up in the women's lightweight 30+. AET Newton finished fourth in the women's lightweight open as eight of the 18 competing Royal Navy team achieved top-ten places.

Aspiring rowers should contact their PT staff. For more information visit www.pdevportal.co.uk



● Lt Cdr Jim Hyde looks exhausted

Picture: Jason Roffey LSWPP